



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

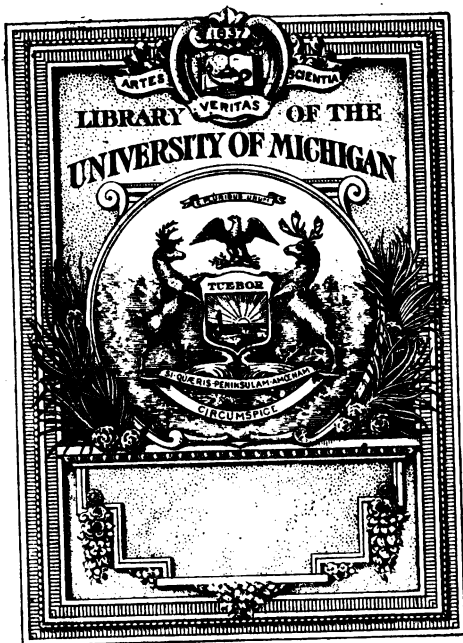
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

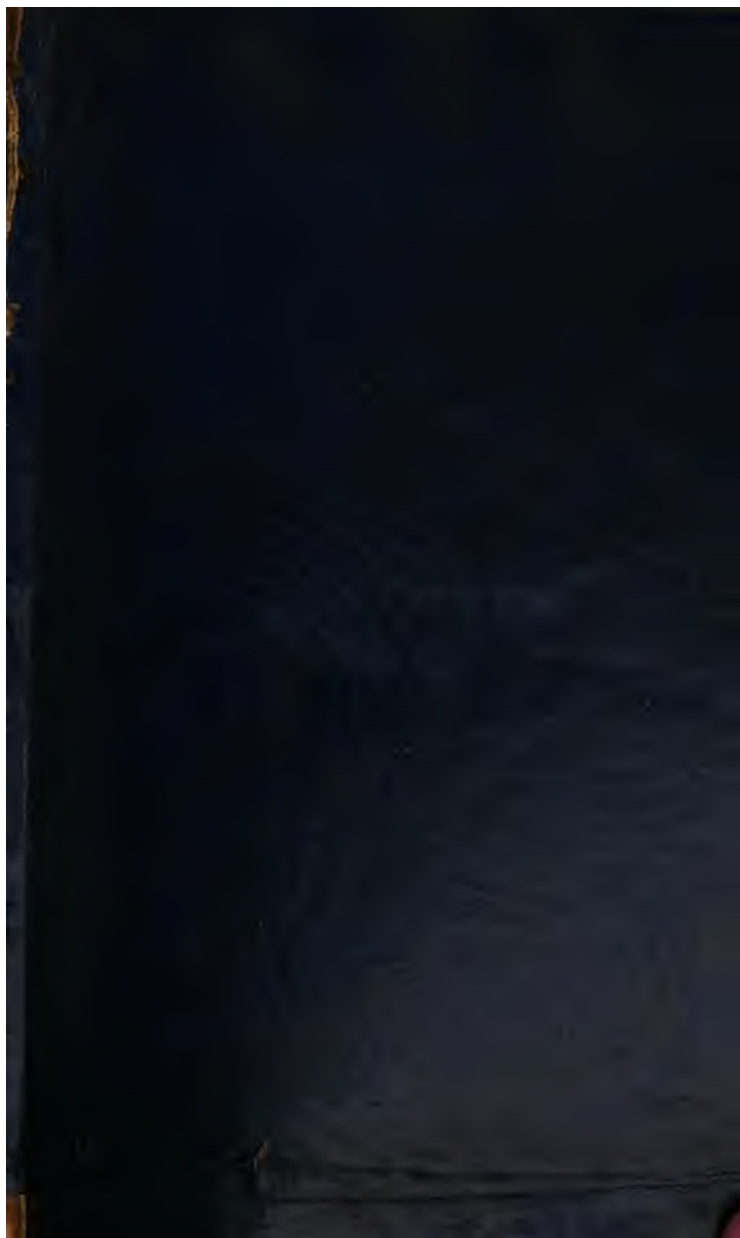
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

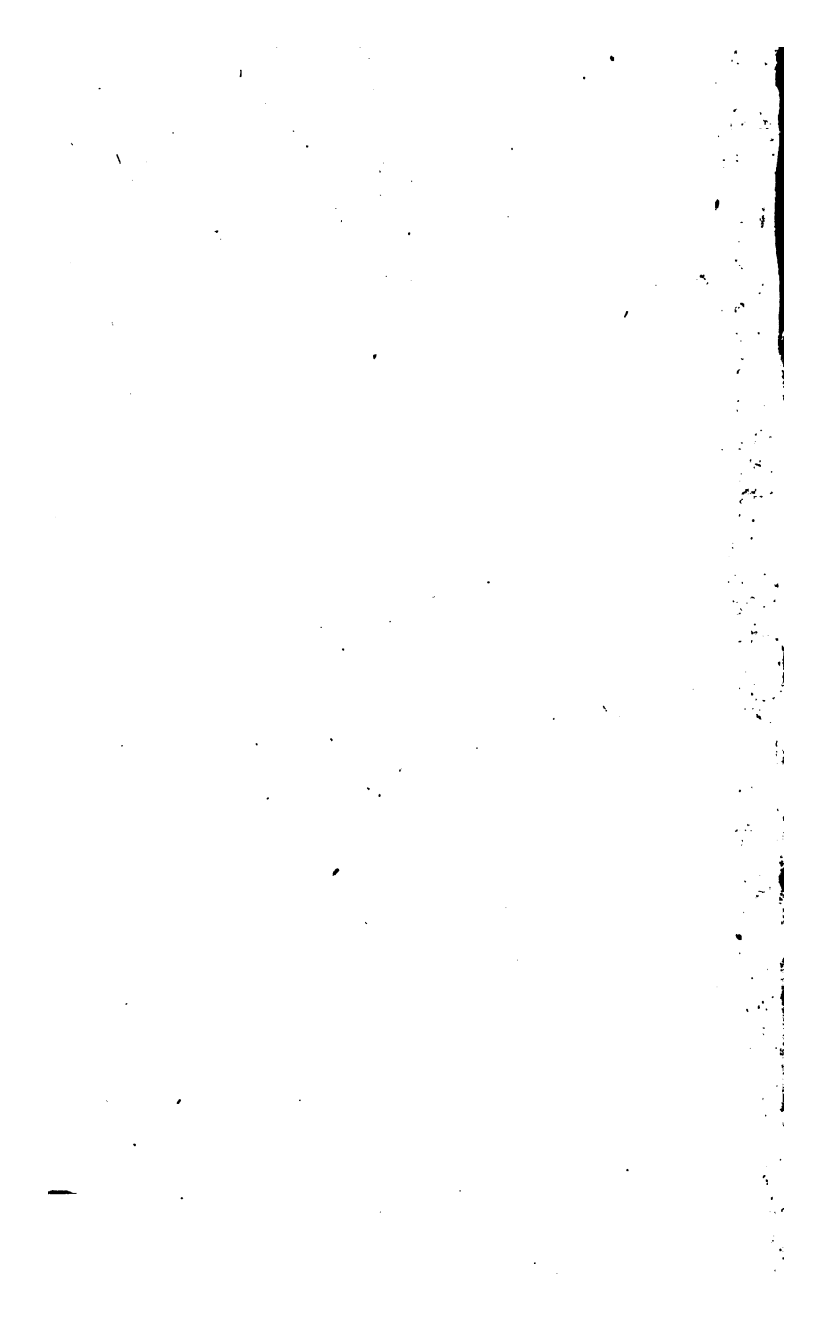
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



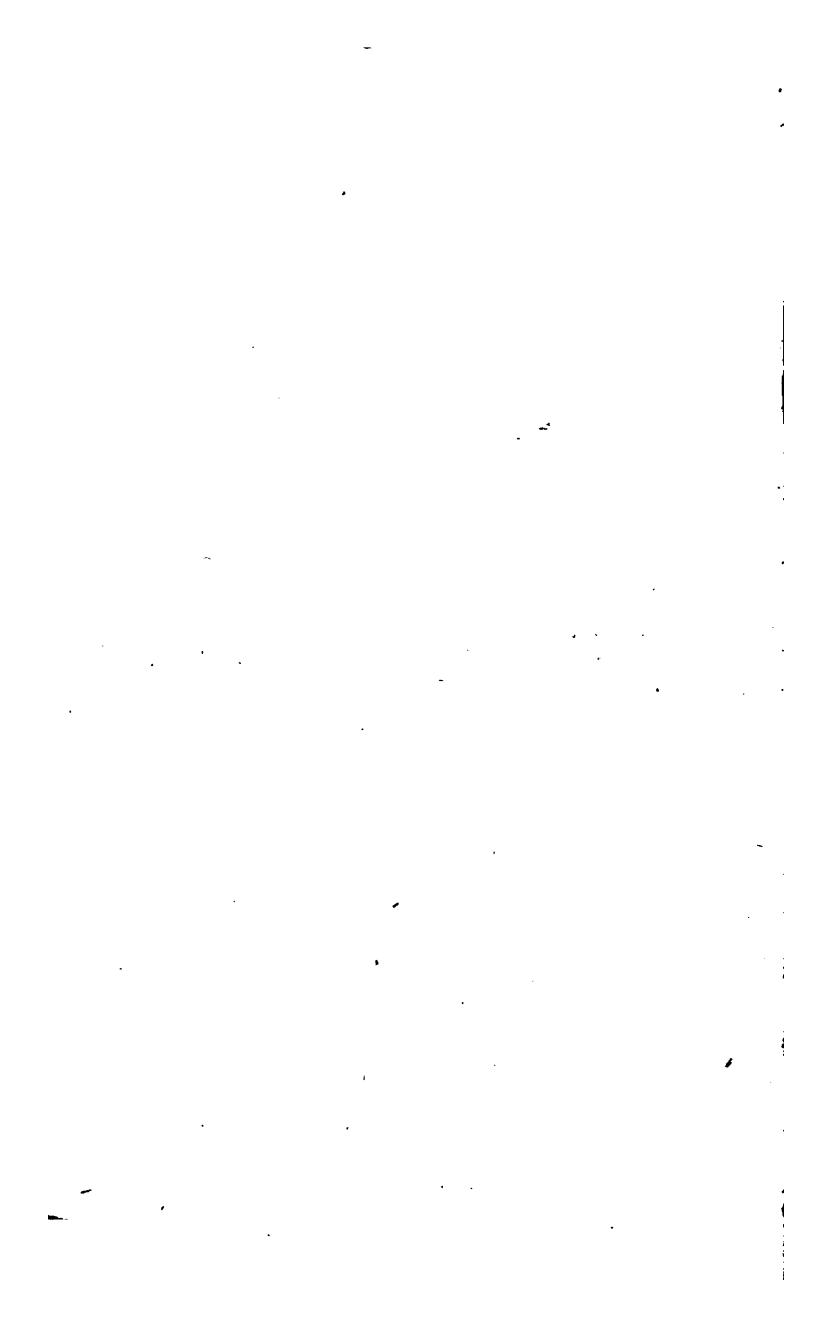
THE GIFT OF
Sidney C. Eastman





THE
VALLEY OF SHENANDOAH.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.



Tucker, George

THE
VALLEY OF SHENANDOAH;

OR,

Memoirs

OF THE GRAYSONS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Fame, honour, beauty, state, train, blood, and birth,
Are but the fading blossoms of the earth. Sir H. WOTTON.

VOL. III.



NEW - YORK :

PRINTED FOR C. WILEY, WALL-STREET.

LONDON :

REPRINTED FOR A. K. NEWMAN & CO. LEADENHALL-STREET.

1825.

828

V18

v. 3

THE

VALLEY OF SHENANDOAH.

CHAPTER I.

IT happened, when Gildon had been about a week at Stanley, that there was to be a great barbacue, at a place not above six or seven miles distant, to which all the neighbouring gentry were invited. Gildon sent for his new purchase, being desirous of appearing mounted to the best advantage in the eyes of his mistress, and he found that the malady which the knowing Mr. Collins had foreseen had actually come to pass. The old defluxion at the eyes had returned; and rowelling, or some other operation was necessary before he

VOL. III.

B

321295

3-18-18. m.e.

could see well enough to be ridden. He was even content then to ride the horse with which Edward had furnished him.

They set off about eleven o'clock, and when within a mile of the place, they overtook, or were overtaken by, numbers on horseback, in coaches, chariots, phaetons, and gigs, many of whom had a most weatherbeaten and antediluvian air. Here was a youth gaily mounted, dressed in silk stockings, with large bunches of ribbon at the knees of his buff kerseymere breeches—there another in a coat of pea-green, or some other colour as lively and unusual; the gaiety and variety of their habiliments indicated the mirthful character of the company.

The ladies too were variously arrayed and decorated, nearly all with costly clothes, which were then, or had once been, fashionable; but many in dresses that had been long since antiquated. Indeed some of the leading modes for the last twenty years might have been discovered there, in the gowns, or headdresses, or shawls,

or ornamental trimmings of the ladies; and it is doubtful whether the most crowded promenade in Paris or London afforded as great a variety of fabric, or cut, or colour, as was at that day exhibited at the Cove Hills, in Cheptank, on the Potomac.

The proportion of pale or sallow countenances was very great, some of them then labouring under tertian agues, and others shewing by their faces surcharged with bile that they were destined to some autumnal disease. A large crowd of servants were in attendance. Some were employed in preparing the dinner, which consisted of different articles, cooked over burning coals in the bottom of a long pit, dug about three feet deep, for the purpose of the barbecue—across the top of which pigs, young shoats, mutton, lamb, and fowls, were fastened to wooden spits, all of which were ever and anon basted with vinegar and red pepper, by means of a piece of linen fastened to a long stick.

The savoury fumes which arose from these reeking pits regaled the nostrils of the epicures, and made them impatient for the tempting repast. A long rude table was prepared for the occasion, under a number of tall trees, that had been perhaps for half a century used for the same purpose. The table-cloths, knives and forks, bread and liquors, were contributed by the families concerned; the whole scene wore the appearance of bustle, and festivity, and joy.

In the adjoining house, which had once been a tavern, was a long room, where the young people were exercising their limbs in dancing reels, consisting of four, five, and even six couples, in which no regard was paid to suiting the figure to the tune, though it must be admitted they kept admirable time with their feet. Two fiddlers and one fifer, all black, rent the air with their enlivening sounds; and when they first struck up a favourite Scotch air, they set the whole room capering.

There were no useless ceremonials among the company, and very little reserve, but all was life, jollity, and exuberant mirth, unaccompanied with disorder or rudeness. The gentlemen, in their gayest apparel, vied in the profoundness of their respect to the ladies; bow after bow prefaced every application to a lady to dance a reel, though many barely knew each other's names, and were not in the habit of meeting, except at some public place. Whenever a gentleman was remarkable for his awkwardness in dancing, or his uncouth and rustic appearance, the damsels would commonly make some slight excuse for not dancing, which they very readily forgot whenever a more agreeable swain solicited the same favour.

The ladies seemed, as Gildon thought, to enjoy the sport yet more than their gallants; they could hold out longer in the violent exercise which the quick tunes of their dances occasion; and the moment after one was seated, she was ready to take the floor again, if invited; and so

prompt were they to be led out, that Gildon, seeing a young lady he had been previously introduced to at Stanley, and going up to pay his respects to her, she held forth her hand to be led out in a reel. As he had never practised this dance, he was compelled to make an awkward apology for declining the honour she had meant to confer, to the great mortification of both parties, and the infinite diversion of the bystanders.

The same unequal distribution of good and ill fortune was seen here as in the rest of human life—some danced continually, and some not at all. It was easy to see, that the ladies, who from their beauty, fortune, skill in dancing, or adroit knack of getting themselves noticed, were oftenest taken out, and were objects of envy to those who were less distinguished, especially to those who were utterly neglected; for most of the females who were habituated to this neglect had either grown indifferent to it, or had learnt the art of concealing their mortification.

The party from Stanley took no greater share in the amusement than was necessary to avoid singularity; and as Gildon did not dance at all, and Louisa having consented to take a part in a reel with a genteel young man (the same that was mentioned at Colchester), and perceiving that it gave her lover pain, pretended a headach, and refused to dance again. Gildon was very much amused at the scene around him, and recovering his good humour, as well as gratified at the kind consideration of Louisa, he diverted her and her friend very much with his lively and satirical remarks on the company—his whimsical comparisons—his ironical praises of the dress, and air, and movements of the motley figures, which were alternately springing, or swimming, or labouring before them, as they severally happened to be ambitious of agility or grace.

By-and-by dinner was announced, when every rural swain was all eagerness to get possession of the hand of his favourite

fair. The gentlemen stood behind the ladies, and assisted in carving and waiting on them. When these had dined, they were as courteously, though not quite so formally, reconducted to the ball-room, where a few of the beaux had remained, that they might be more sure of some favourite lady for a partner, or of the possession of the floor, now that the number of competitors was reduced, while the greater part returned to take their seats at the dinner-table. Among these were the guests from Stanley, as Gildon, being a stranger, was particularly invited by one of the managers. A fresh supply of barbecued shoat, and mutton, and veal, was now served up; and there was soon a happy mixture of speculative and practical criticism on their several merits. Gildon thought he had never seen such good judges of eating.

When the gentlemen returned to the dancing-room, they found the floor covered with the dancers as before; and the increase of animal spirits which eating and

VALLEY OF SHENANDOAH.

drinking produce, even where there is no excess, gave a new spring to their merriment and festivity; the gentlemen jumped higher and oftener, attempted new and hazardous movements of the foot, and endeavoured to "snatch a grace beyond the reach of art." The ladies too caught the contagion; they turned around oftener, and danced with a brisker step and freer air, until some were visibly in the condition of a courser who has just finished his race.

A happier, merrier set was never seen; and in the midst of this uproar of festive mirth, an elderly gentleman, who had taken the lead in conducting the festival, feeling himself grow young again, as he said, went to a gay young widow, whose spirits had risen with those of the company, and challenging her to a jig, by general consent of the bystanders the other dancers gave way. The fiddlers then striking up one of the quickest and liveliest tunes they knew, this veteran lover

of sport led out the little plump Mrs. Locket on the floor, and they began their performance amidst the acclamations of the company. It was in vain that the old gentleman husbanded his strength and wind. In a few minutes his powers began to flag, while the little widow, becoming more supple and agile as she became more heated by her own motion, frisked round and round him, now setting, now rapidly shooting from one side of the room to the other, and now spinning like a top.

“Don't give up, colonel!”—“Keep it up, colonel!”—“Well done, colonel!” were then shouted from all quarters of the room; but it would not do—the old soldier had overrated his strength; he was fairly outdone, and must literally have fallen on the field of contest, if another veteran (though a few years younger), had not also sought similar distinction; and jumping between the ill-matched dancers, “cut the colonel out.”

“Two to one is not fair,” said some.

“I'll match the widow against them

both," said others; and the little lady seemed so willing to try her powers against this new reinforcement, that all opposition was withdrawn, and the spectators looked on with renewed interest, to see the issue of the contest. The widow seemed to have acquired new strength for the occasion; she made a pirouette much bolder and more rapid than she had before exhibited, as if to shew the spectators the instruments of her wonderful agility; and whisked, and spun, and sailed around the room with such an untired spirit, that half-a-dozen voices cried—"Joetank for ever!" and whether she had not made this new competitor also strike his colours, most eyes remain uncertain, for the chief fiddler's string suddenly snapped, and thus, "by good luck," as Marmontel says, the lively widow's honour was saved.

She was highly complimented by the gentlemen, but it was easy to see that more than one uncharitable remark was made by the ladies; and it was doubtful, from her own air, whether she did not

find, in the triumph of her success, somewhat to detract from her gratification.

About five o'clock the company began to disperse; and in the course of an hour the place was entirely deserted, except by about a dozen young men, who staid behind to play at loo, and to finish the punch and wine which remained. There were several of these parties during the summer. Sometimes they were on the river banks; and when the materials of the repast were drawn altogether from the river, these meetings are called "Fish Frys," and most commonly attended by the humbler classes in society.

Louisa had felt great compunction at first, in having disregarded her mother's injunctions in receiving the attentions of Gildon; and she thought that as she had, without any fault of her own, been thrown into his company thus unexpectedly, she ought to communicate the circumstance to her mother, and she at first resolved to do so by the next post; but ere three days had elapsed, she felt unwilling to distress

her parent, whose afflictions were already sufficiently heavy; with the apprehensions she would naturally entertain—apprehensions which she knew indeed to be without reason, and which, if they had been well founded, must under existing circumstances be unavailing. She expected that Gildon would soon leave Stanley; and to what good purpose then communicate the disagreeable intelligence? It was by such sophistry as this that she excused herself for not doing her duty; and indeed it is by similar self-delusion that a majority of mankind, not hardened in sin and error, seek apologies for humouring their ruling propensities and unlicensed inclinations.

After the first long walk she had with Gildon, when she had retired to her room; she reproached herself severely for her imprudence; and unfortunately, in communicating her regrets to her cousin, she found her both from good nature and the love of romance, disposed to remove her scruples, rather than confirm them; and that young lady said so much, and was

heard so favourably on this topic, that she began to think her mother's caution was unnecessary and ill founded.

She thought to herself—"Suppose Mr. Giffon's father will not yield to the wishes of his only son, and should insist on sacrificing his happiness on the shrine of avarice, yet he himself is determined to persist in his suit; and in such a noble cause of disinterestedness, ought I to give him up? or can I do it? Give him up! It is impossible! I could much more easily render up my life. And if our future union is thus necessary and unavoidable, to what purpose then impose such severe restraints on myself, such punishment on him whom my soul adores? Ought I not rather to make a kind return for so much devotion and love, and endeavour to sooth, so far as I can with propriety, the anxieties that must attend his present uncertain situation?"

When the evening came, and Julia Barton proposed their usual walk, she did not refuse to accompany her; and, to say the

truth, it was that part of the twenty-four hours which she recollected with most interest, and looked forward to with most pleasure.

In these evening promenades they sometimes extended their walk so far, that it was nearly dark before they reached the house; and Gildon and Louisa would be often some distance in the rear, while Jones and his mistress would have to wait some minutes at the great gate for them to come up. At these times Gildon had not forbore to repeat the trespass he had committed at the Elms; and while it was at first resisted as improper, and afterwards pleaded against, yet he finally prevailed, and it seemed at length to be a thing of course for him to snatch a hasty kiss, whenever they were shrouded from observation by the shades of twilight, or the turns of the road.

One evening, when the conversation had been more animated than usual, and there had been one of those little misunderstandings which sometimes take place

between the most tender lovers (which indeed but serves to fan the flame of love), and it had been followed of course by an affectionate reconciliation, they passed a fork in the road—upon which Louisa, looking around with a more disengaged mind, began to fear they had missed their way. Her lover, however, assuring her they were right, they proceeded on. They had not walked far before one of those thunder clouds, which often suddenly appear at this season of the year, had risen above the horizon, and threatened an immediate shower. They then turned on their steps, and concluded that their friends had, by some short cut, found their way to the house before the rain fell.

In a short time they came to another fork in the road—the left leading towards the negro quarter, and the right towards the house. It happened that they took the left, and before they had proceeded an hundred yards, the rain began to fall. They quickened their pace, and the road grew darker from the overclouding of the

sky, the increasing shades of twilight, and the greater closeness of the woods. Gildon naturally inferred he was moving further from the house, yet he hesitated whether he should not proceed, for he knew if he turned back, he must go some distance before he could reach any shelter; and he had a chance of meeting some person in the road they were in, in case they were mistaken; and they might moreover be right. Louisa was too much alarmed and distressed at the thought of missing her way, and of being alone with her lover at so late an hour, to be able to give any counsel, or to reason on the subject.

They accordingly walked on in the rain, which now fell very fast. Gildon insisted on pulling off his coat, to protect his fair charge; but she would not permit it, and on they trudged. After awhile they came to a piece of open ground, where stood several old log cabins, that had once been negro houses, but had been long since deserted, for some more convenient situation. They went into the best of them, and

with some difficulty, seated on a log in one corner, they found a shelter from the rain.

Louisa was so much distressed at her situation, that her lover found great difficulty in calming her apprehensions. Seating himself by her, he reminded her that she must be within a mile of Stanley—that the shower would soon be over—and that the path most used no doubt led to the house; that her friends would recollect, that as they were before, it was natural that Louisa and he should continue their walk, and quite as probable that they should take the wrong fork as the right one, when they were strangers to both. These arguments would have been thrown away, if the shower had not evidently abated, and a negro man, with a basket on his head, carrying water-melons to the “great house,” to traffic for bacon, had not passed by, and confirmed Gildon’s conjectures.

Louisa’s spirits were greatly revived by these circumstances, and Gildon was emboldened to renew the interesting subject

of his passion. He said he was more and more convinced of the impossibility of living without her; and if he found, on returning to New-York, that his father was obdurate, he should return immediately to Virginia, and put her professions of regard to the proof. He asked if she would then refuse her hand, and drive him to despair? She confessed she would in that issue unite her fate to his; and forgetting all the prudent advice of her mother, or rather thinking that, as in any event they were to be united, she no longer withheld the confession of her fixed and unalterable affection; which disclosure always breaks down a large portion of the restraint that education and the forms of society have created in the intercourse between the sexes. How could she, after this *epanchement de cœur*, refuse those little favours which love delights in giving and receiving, and which are never so dangerous as when they are most innocent? In a word, from the moment of this interview, Louisa considered herself

as betrothed in the sight of Heaven, and gave him her whole heart and unlimited confidence.

Jones and Julia Barton, who had taken the right-hand road, perceiving the approaching shower, had returned, and passed the forks of the road soon after the other couple had taken the wrong one. Not meeting with Gildon and Louisa, they took it for granted on that account that they also had turned back; and it occasioned no little alarm when they found, on their return to the house, that Louisa was not there. Servants were immediately dispatched on both roads, with great coats and umbrellas, and one of them found the lovers just as they were about to leave the old cabin, and when it had nearly ceased raining.

Louisa, on reaching the house, hurried up stairs to change her wet clothes; and afterwards complaining of being indisposed, she continued in her room. When left alone, the poor girl threw herself on the bed, overwhelmed with the most poig-

nant grief and remorse. The errors of her late conduct—her imprudence in encouraging Gildon's attentions—her abuse of her mother's confidence—and, above all, the danger of forfeiting the good opinion of her lover, all rose in judgment against her, and put her on a bed of torture. Nor could she bring herself to disclose the whole extent of her imprudence to her friend; it was bad enough to be known to herself and her lover, but insupportable if it were known to another.

She passed a wretched and sleepless night, and the next day a severe headach furnished her with a well-founded excuse for not appearing at breakfast. It was followed by a slight fever, that continued two days, during which Gildon felt the most painful solicitude, and sought solace for his anxiety by conversations with Miss Barton, in which Louisa was the perpetual theme. He sent her by her cousin the tenderest messages throughout the day, and indited the most impassioned and ardent epistles that love, in the full blaze

of its power and in the spring-tide of success, could inspire.

On the evening of the second day she ventured down stairs, just before candles were lighted; and as Gildon was apprized of her coming, he soon entered the parlour, and approaching her in a manner equally respectful and tender, inquired into the state of her health. She felt so confounded as scarcely to be able to reply. The blood for a moment burnt in her cheek, which it then as suddenly left, to flow back on her heart, while her limbs trembled, and her voice faltered, as in a few short broken sentences she pronounced herself better.

Miss Barton having withdrawn for a moment, Gildon addressed her more familiarly, and in the most earnest manner besought forgiveness for the anxiety he had occasioned her. He entreated her not to punish him further for his transgressions, by such reserved behaviour; he affected generously to take the whole blame on himself, and so soothed her pride, that in

a few minutes, when her cousin returned, she had sufficiently regained her composure to talk on indifferent subjects.

The next morning she kept her room, under the plea of indisposition; and having come down stairs early in the afternoon, her cousin proposed their usual walk, but she peremptorily refused; nor could any arguments or entreaties of Gildon induce her to change her purpose. He then became displeased; and not sufficiently respecting the self-denial which she exerted, he upbraided her with want of affection, and maintained a silence and reserve the rest of the evening, which attracted the notice of the whole family. The displeasure of her lover was sufficient to induce her to make the utmost endeavours to restore his complacency, but not to depart from her resolve.

For three successive evenings she resisted, though Gildon tried to enforce his own earnest solicitations, by the persuasions of her friend, until he announced to the family that the time for his departure had

arrived, and that, instead of proceeding to Williamsburg, as he had intended, he should forthwith return to New-York, in consequence of the last letters he had received. He also desired Miss Barton to tell Louisa, that he wished to have a short interview with her, for the purpose of making some important disclosure relative to his affairs, and to entreat her to afford him an opportunity of doing so on the following evening.

At first she refused, alleging to her cousin that such long walks subjected her to the remarks of the servants and others; then she began to argue the matter, and finally she consented, as it was for the last time, to walk as usual for a short distance.

When they began their promenade, Gildon, according to custom, wished to fall behind, but Louisa insisted on walking before, and kept as near her young friends as she could, without giving them an opportunity of overhearing her conversation. Her lover then stated, that a more peremptory letter from his father than he

had yet received, had just been forwarded to him from Frederick, according to directions left in the post-office, which urged him to return immediately, and expressed a wish that he should enter into business without delay. He then exacted from her a promise of writing to him during his absence, and instructed her how to address her letters. He assured her he should write to her at least once a week, to which there could be no objection; and he appointed some time in December following to be with her again, when his first wish on earth should be consummated, either with or without his father's consent.

She said but little, except that she was most unhappy. She was dissatisfied with herself; and she intimated her fears of some forfeiture of his good opinion: to all which he replied with the usual asseverations and protestations of increased confidence, affection, and gratitude. These sentiments, always so grateful to the ears of lovers, were doubly welcome at this.

time, and Louisa found them inexpressibly soothing to her distressed and mortified feelings. Her confidence in herself gradually returned, and she finished her walk with great self-approbation for the prudence and firmness she had displayed, and with delight at the sentiments expressed by her lover.

On the following evening, when a walk was again proposed, positively for the last time, Louisa at first hesitated; but encouraged by the agreeable result of the one of the evening before, she complied once more with her lover's solicitations. They set out as on the preceding evening, except that Louisa, though she would not consent to walk behind, suffered Gildon to hurry her some distance in advance of her cousin; and in the earnestness of their declarations of mutual attachment and eternal faith, they insensibly prolonged their walk to the fork of the road which had first misled them; when Gildon, whether by accident or design the writer of these pages has never ascertained, took

the road which led to the old houses. As soon as Louisa saw where she was, she manifested the greatest impatience and uneasiness at finding they had again missed their way; but on her lover's reminding her that they must soon be separated by a distance of five hundred miles, and a painful absence of several weeks, she suffered him to impress on her lips those caresses, which, he said, could alone give him assurance of her real affection, and the remembrance of which would afford him such sweet consolation in his absence. They after a while retraced their steps, but not until Jones and Julia Barton had been waiting for them nearly half an hour.

Louisa approached Miss Barton and her lover with a silent, melancholy air, which was naturally attributed to the approaching departure of Gildon; and the amiable Julia sincerely sympathized with her in her distress; though, romantic as she was, she evidently thought there was as much to be admired as pitied in sufferings of this nature.

They sat but a short time after their return; and the young ladies retired at an early hour, at the earnest solicitations of Louisa. The next morning Gildon, after expressing his lively sense of the kind and hospitable reception he had met with in a house, with whose inmates he was, three weeks before, a perfect stranger, shook hands with them all, except Louisa. She, dreading the effect of a farewell, the very idea of which was so terrible, excused herself by her cousin, and to make amends, sent her lover a note, breathing sentiments of exquisite tenderness, which had been plainly watered by her tears. He could have wished to have bid her adieu once more; but finding it impossible, he mounted his new purchase, and accompanied by Frank Barton's servant, set off for the stage road, which he reached in time to take a seat for Alexandria about ten o'clock in the morning; he thence proceeded, without much interruption, to the state of New-York, where we must leave him for a while, to attend to some other per-

sonages, to whom we have already introduced the reader.

Mrs. Grayson, after the departure of her beloved children, no longer called upon to make the efforts which their presence required, was not able effectually to repress the poignant feelings of grief which assailed her; and it must be confessed, that it can seldom fall to the lot of any one to have more or greater causes of affliction. Besides the regret which she felt for the loss of an affectionate husband, whose image, always tenderly cherished, came upon her recollection at times with so much force as to make his death seem but as yesterday, she was about to be thrown from a state of ease and affluence into one of absolute penury, and thus the children for whom alone she now cared to live, were soon to be deprived of those comforts and enjoyments which wealth can give, and that consideration which it procures from the world. But it was yet a greater source of anxiety and apprehension to her, that these children were both

likely to be thwarted in their affections by the loss of their fortunes: for her daughter indeed she felt the most serious alarm.

With such an accumulation of present and of threatened evil, it is no wonder that she for a time yielded to its force, and that her piety was not able to support her. After a day of bitterness and tribulation, she recovered somewhat of her former composure, and began to make preparations for that change in her situation which was now become necessary, and to provide an asylum for her daughter before she returned to Frederick. She immediately wrote to Mr. Trueheart to come over, for the purpose of assisting her with his advice in the disposal of the property. She also wrote to Edward to proceed to make sale of the Easton estate; and having executed these necessary pieces of business, she felt greatly relieved.

She then went about twilight to make a visit, as she often did, to the spot in which the remains of her husband were deposited. This had been surrounded

with a neat railing, within which were two or three weeping willows; and a small white urn had been procured from Philadelphia, around which had been carefully planted roses, and jasmines, and other fragrant flowers. Often in the stillness of the evening, and the darker the more consonant was it to her feelings, would she take a lonely walk to this spot, and without any violent paroxysms of grief, ideally commune with his departed spirit, and secretly implore the aid and support of the great Author of all to guide her in her difficulties; for in her mind the image of her husband was always associated with a feeling of religion and devotion, to which indeed pure and virtuous love in woman is very nearly allied.

She had often forbore to gratify herself in this sad luxury, for fear of attracting observation, or of being suspected by the unfeeling or narrow-minded of affectation, or of being ostentatious of her grief, and because she knew it distressed her children to see her give way to her feelings; but

since they had left her, and she was not restrained by the last consideration, there never was a night, when she had no visitors, that she did not take this solitary walk. Sometimes, rapt in the contemplation of past scenes of bliss, or bewildered with the difficulties of the future, she would remain longer than was prudent at this season of the year, so near the fogs of the river.

Finding no inconvenience from the practice, she had been led insensibly to consider it as safe—until one evening, about the middle of September, when the night air began to be chilly, she happened to stay out longer than usual, and the next evening she was taken with a slight shivering, which was followed by a sharp ague, and the next day it assumed the appearance of a bilious fever.

She immediately sent for her family physician, a man of great prudence and experience, who, finding she was threatened with a disease of some continuance, rode over to Mr. Buckley's, and requested

one of the family to call and stay with her. Fanny Buckley, who from her intimacy with Louisa, was oftener at Beachwood than her sister, immediately rode over to attend her amiable friend ; and, besides being a most assiduous nurse, endeavoured, by her cheerfulness and little attentions, to keep up the spirits of her patient.

Matilda Fawcner, as soon as she heard of Mrs. Grayson's illness, insisted with her mother on going to her ; and reached Mrs. Grayson's a short time after Miss Buckley. Both these young women were unwearied in their assiduities to this excellent woman, whose mildness of manners, and heavenly patience of temper, were never more conspicuous than on the sick bed. The ordinary remedies were tried without success, and in three or four days it was circulated about the neighbourhood that Mrs. Grayson was dangerously ill.

The news flew rapidly over the county, and was every where heard with the live-

liest concern. There was not a neighbour who had not, at some time or other, experienced her kindness in sickness, or in the way of charity, and who did not feel that her loss would be a general calamity. The servants too, to whom she was so attentive a nurse, were seriously alarmed at her situation, and inquired a dozen times a day whether any change had taken place. Messages of inquiry came from all the neighbours, and even from persons with whom, on account of the distance, they had no intercourse—some bringing such little rarity or delicacy as was thought might be acceptable, and some recommending favourite remedies, or offering to sit up with her; and had the young ladies who were staying with her been so disposed, they need never have attended upon her two nights successively.

On the third day, when Matilda saw that her excellent friend was evidently growing worse, she proposed to her to let Louisa know of her situation; but the tender mother, always more anxious for

her children's happiness than her own, positively forbid it, believing that she would probably soon mend, and it would be cruel in her to inflict unnecessary pain; still, on being strongly pressed by both her young visitors, she consented, if she was not better in two days, that Matilda might not only write, but that the carriage should be sent for her daughter.

The two days accordingly passed, and no change for the better having taken place, the carriage was directed to be prepared; and on the following morning, by daylight, Phill set off, with a letter from Matilda, so worded as to excite as little apprehension as possible, which reached Stanley shortly after Gildon had let it. Louisa and Julia Barton were walking by themselves, as Jones had departed the day that Gildon had left them, at the request of his mistress, that she might more effectually console her cousin in the absence of her lover. They naturally turned their steps in that direction where they had most frequently walked, when they

heard the sound of carriage-wheels at a distance; and not wishing to be seen by strangers while thus unattended, they immediately hastened towards the house; but a lash or two of the whip quickened the pace of the horses, and in a little while the carriage overtook them, and was recognised by Louisa as the family-chariot.

Her first emotion at the sight of old Phill was that of joy, and in a moment recollecting where she saw him, she apprehended he was the bearer of some unwelcome message, and she trembled with alarm.

“How is mamma, uncle Phill?”

“She is not well, Miss Louisa.”

“Oh! what is the matter? tell me; she is not sick, is she?”

“She has been sick two or three days, and Miss Matilda thought I had better come for you.”

“Where is my letter, uncle Phill?”

“Here it is,” said the old man, taking

it out of an old black pocketbook, and handing it to her.

When she read that her dear mother was sick, probably in extreme danger, she felt almost beside herself. She determined on setting off the next morning; and on going back to the house, she informed the family of her resolution; nor could they prevail on her to let the horses rest even half a day. Frank Barton was out of the way, but the overseer, a steady, decent man, was immediately put in requisition to escort her.

CHAPTER II.

~~~~~

THE next day, after an early breakfast, and an affectionate leave of her kind and amiable relatives, she left Stanley, with a heart rent with bitter and conflicting emotions. She recollected, that three weeks before, when she had approached that hos-

pitiable mansion, she thought herself supremely miserable; and yet what was her situation then, compared to what it was at this time? Then her darling mother was in good health—she herself was in the act of complying with that mother's wishes, and was supported under her trials with self-approbation, nothing of which was the case at present.

She travelled on with a heavy heart, stopping as little as possible at private houses; and on the evening of the third day, as she came down the mountain of Ashby's Gap, at Berry's Ferry, and saw the dear mansion of her family, it awakened recollections and emotions which caused her to weep excessively. Good old Phill, discovering her distress, turned round, and said—"Miss Louisa, don't be uneasy. Mistress is not so very sick, and she will be distressed to see you take on so."

"I was only thinking of past times, uncle Phill. I hope my mother is better;

for, God knows, if I thought she were worse, it would make me distracted."

When the carriage came in sight of the house, Louisa thought it a favourable symptom to perceive two young ladies walking towards them, one of whom she was sure was Matilda. They met at a short distance from the gate; in a moment the carriage door was thrown open, and Louisa and Matilda were in each other's arms; the question of—"How is mamma; Matilda?" having preceded every other.

"She is much better I hope," said her friend.

As soon as, on further inquiry, Louisa's anxious fears for her mother's safety had subsided, her thoughts turned more on herself, and the reflections which then presented themselves were of a still more painful character. With her desire to behold her beloved mother, there was mingled a good deal of undefined fear, and a feeling of shame and self-reproach, that she could not meet her with all that ingenuousness that once made their intercourse

that of two friends of unequal age, rather than of parent and child.

Bella ran out to meet her, exclaiming, "Oh, Miss Louisa, I am so glad to see you back! Mistress is better to-day; but she has been mighty ill.—Lord, Miss Louisa, how pale you look! Mistress was afraid you would not have your health down the country. Granny will be so glad to see you! Granny says she's had no good coffee since you went away. How did you leave master Edward? is he still in Williamsburg?" And thus the girl, with the freedom of a servant brought up in the family, chattered away from the gate to the chamber door, unconsciously, by every word, planting daggers in her heart.

Mrs. Grayson had been thought much better in the morning, both by her attendants and the physician, and she had prepared herself for the meeting. With a soul of the most feeling character, she had remarkable patience and equanimity. Her passions were delicate rather than strong.

She was lying on her bed, with a white handkerchief round her brows, to relieve her from the slight headach which attended her disease; and this, with the effect of three days' fever, made her appear in her daughter's eyes still more altered than she really was.—“ My dear daughter!”—“ Oh, my mother, my mother!” were all they said when they embraced.

Mrs. Grayson endeavoured to allay the fears of her daughter, by giving as favourable answers as she could to her affectionate inquiries. In spite of all her exertions to appear cheerful, Louisa exhibited uncommon emotion. In her first embrace, as she laid her head on the bosom of her mother, she sobbed aloud. Matilda gently requested her to restrain her feelings, but it was some time before she sufficiently recovered her composure to converse with her mother freely, and to give full answers to her inquiries.

Fanny Buckley was delighted to see Louisa; but having made some remark on her altered appearance, Mrs. Grayson

looked at her daughter more narrowly, and perceiving her much paler and more delicate than when she left Beachwood, she was apprehensive that the cause which had recommended her visit had been still preying on her sensitive heart: she forbore however to say any thing that would lead the conversation to this delicate and painful subject.

In a little while doctor Selby arrived, and finding his patient's pulse quicker than the day before, and all the symptoms less favourable, he good-naturedly scolded his young acquaintances for their imprudence, and cautioned Mrs. Grayson against suffering herself to be agitated. This put a stop to all further conversation between Louisa and her mother, and thus spared her the pain of further disingenuousness—as she would have felt herself justified in concealing from her mother that she had seen Gildon, rather than distress her by communicating it in her present situation.

As soon as they had withdrawn from

Mrs. Grayson's sick-room, Fanny Buckley began to make close inquiries about Gildon—where he was when she had heard from him, and when she expected him; all of which she was able to answer, without either deviating from the truth, or imparting the whole of it, but which it was mortifying in the extreme to be compelled to do; and she then found, that we are never exempted from the punishment which is sure to attend disingenuousness.

Often she was on the point of disclosing every thing to her young friend; but a sense of shame, and a distrust of Fanny Buckley's discretion, checked her. She was however resolved to be less reserved towards Matilda, on whose friendship and prudence she could equally rely. As soon then as Fanny Buckley went into Mrs. Grayson's room, to prepare and administer a dose of medicine, Louisa, who had been employed on some household matters, led Matilda into her room, and then gave her a disclosure of nearly all that had occurred. Matilda listened to her narrative

with breathless anxiety, and experienced a variety of emotions and fears, none of which she ventured to express, except her regret for what she had heard, insisting however on a promise from Louisa, that she would not see her lover again without the consent of her mother, nor even then, unless he should be prepared to fulfil his engagements at once; for she saw too plainly that her friend had not the strength of mind to pursue that course which her judgment might dictate.

Louisa wept tears in abundance after her confession; and having given vent to her feelings, and readily consented to make the promise which her friend exacted, and of which she had seen the propriety before, she felt greatly relieved, and returned to her mother's room with a degree of composure which she had not felt for the last ten days. Such is the virtue in the balm of confiding friendship.

It was in vain, however, that she and her young companions made use of every art, and little soothing attention, in their



power; for the benefit of the excellent Mrs. Grayson. The agitations of the morning, in spite of all her self-command, had heightened her fever, and it still continued to increase; she passed a bad night, and the day following the doctor thought her much worse. In the evening he returned again, and finding her no better, he proposed to call in a gentleman of eminence from Winchester, who was accordingly sent for. This was a signal of alarm to Louisa, the servants, and the neighbours. There was not an hour in the day in which some messenger did not arrive at Beachwood, for the purpose of learning how she was. Doctor Blodget arrived the following morning, when, Mrs. Grayson's fever continuing unabated, her strength had still further declined.

The two attending physicians had long been acknowledged rivals; and they had more foundations for their jealousy than commonly exist among the members of a profession, which is not remarkable for the harmony or liberality of its members.

towards each other. One had been educated in Edinburgh—the other in Philadelphia; one was a disciple of Cullen—the other an admirer of Brown; one was a man of cautious temper—the other bold, sanguine, and sometimes rash. The one was prejudiced against new remedies, especially if they originated here, or had been embraced and supported with zeal by doctor Rush—the other an enthusiastic admirer of that gentleman, and favourably disposed to all new theories, new remedies, and new modes of practice.

As they sometimes came in contact when Blodget first began to practise in Winchester, these foundations for collision had their natural effect. Selby, the graduate of Edinburgh, had used some expressions of contempt respecting Blodget, which came to his ears; and the two meeting in consultation, soon afterwards, at the house of a wealthy man, then in the crisis of a fever, they differed, quarrelled, and finally came to blows. After this they held no sort of intercourse; but

as their quarrel was notorious, they were somewhat reserved in speaking of each other; and professional jealousy, finding less aliment to support it, and venting itself upon younger competitors, gradually subsided; and having been again called to a consultation, in the case of colonel Grayson, whom they both greatly respected, they forgot their past differences, and in their hearty co-operation for the good of their patient, became, if not friendly, at least mutually civil and respectful. There was afterwards nothing to be observed in their occasional meetings, but a great deal of formality and politeness in their intercourse; and whatever one recommended, the other did not directly disapprove, but opposed in the form of a suggestion, a query, or a doubt.

On this occasion, however, it turned out that their views were directly opposite as to the character of the disease, and consequently the character of the remedies; but as time and experience had taught them to feel more respect for each

other's talents, and to moderate their passions, or, at any rate, to conceal them better, they were led, to prevent a difference of opinion, to nothing more than an agreement to call in a third member of the faculty, doctor Minorfee, with whom the reader has already been made acquainted.

He came, saw the patient, and hearing the arguments on both sides, did not hesitate to decide in favour of the depleting remedies recommended by doctor Blodget. He talked very learnedly and fluently on the increased action of the system, of the undue excitability, of direct and indirect debility, and would have resorted to the lancet, but both of the others united in deprecating this, in the exhausted state of the patient. Doctor Selby, somewhat chagrined at his decision, observed, that as the views entertained by a majority were different from his own, and he was bound to acquiesce, he must withdraw, though he would be always ready to aid with his advice when it was further asked.

Blodget began immediately to act rather boldly; and finding no bad consequence to ensue, he persevered; and perceiving the next day a favourable change, though a slight one, he was encouraged further to proceed in the same course; and in two days he pronounced his patient out of danger.

This cure, as it was called, was a proud feather in his cap; not only because it had been performed against the opinion of his most eminent rival, but because it had restored to health the most respected lady of the county; and although it is said to be very probable that nature (who, by reducing the flesh, and strength, and appetite of the patient, was effecting the same end as the doctor did by his medicines) would have wrought the same cure, yet as that could never be ascertained, "the worthy Mrs. Grayson," "the amiable Mrs. Grayson," "the dear Mrs. Grayson," had been saved by doctor Blodget's skill.

The joy at her recovery, which was in

proportion to their previous alarm and uneasiness, made the whole family forget their other misfortunes; and the pleasure which her recovery so obviously communicated, filled her own heart with gratitude, and gave a fresh stimulus to her benevolent feelings.

As soon as Mrs. Grayson was pronounced out of danger, Mrs. Fawcner came to make her a visit; and having gone through the usual forms of congratulation, she insisted on carrying her daughter home, alleging, that nursing and sitting up had evidently affected her health.

Matilda's society had been Louisa's chief solace and support since her return to Beachwood; nor could that of her mother, now that she had, alas! ceased to repose entire confidence in her, supply its place. As to Fanny, she had so little of romance in her composition, was so inferior in understanding, and so apt to tell all she knew, that she could not bring herself to talk of Gildon to her, except in very ge-

neral terms, much less to disclose to her the secret thoughts of her bosom.

In a few days Mrs. Grayson was able to ride out in the carriage; and though extremely weak, the exercise rather strengthened than fatigued her. Returning from her morning's ride, greatly invigorated in strength, and refreshed in spirits, a gentleman and his servant were seen approaching the house, at a moderate gait, and in a little while Primus recognised them to be Mr. Trueheart and his valet. This worthy gentleman had intended to set off for Beachwood as soon as he received Mrs. Grayson's summons, but having at the same time heard the reports of her illness, he deferred a visit which must be useless, and might be unseasonable, and determined to regulate his movements by what he should learn from his friend doctor Blodget of the progress of her disease. As soon as he understood she was decidedly convalescent he set off; and as it was about the time of holding the district court

in Winchester, he concluded to call by Beachwood, and either arrange the business then relative to colonel Grayson's estate, or defer it until after the adjournment of the court.

The generosity and delicacy of this worthy man were never more conspicuous than on this occasion. He assiduously laboured to give the widow of his friend as favourable a view of things as possible consistent with the truth; and in providing for her comfort, and that of her family, to make it seem rather as matters of course, than as the effect of his management or liberality—thus contriving to lighten the weight of obligation, while he increased its value. He endeavoured to shew, that by disposing of the estate on a credit, and borrowing money at legal interest, on the faith of the bonds (which he assured her would be very practicable), enough might be saved, after paying the debts of the estate, to purchase a commodious house and farm for them; that he himself had a claim against the principal



creditor, which might be considered precarious, if hazarded on the uncertainties of the law, but which the same creditor was willing to settle in his debt against the estate—that with this fund Mrs. Grayson might purchase such of the slaves as she was attached to, and repay him at her leisure, when her children were settled in life; and that this delay would be amply compensated to him, by making that secure which was contested and might be eventually lost. Nor did he forget to inform her, that the accounts he had received from Edward were of a very flattering character. The professors, one of whom he had seen the preceding week, gave him a most exalted character.

This exemplary man continued at Beachwood from Friday until Sunday, when having attended Mrs. Grayson and Louisa to the chapel, to return thanks for her late recovery, he proceeded to Winchester, where the district court was to be held on the next day.

The Saturday's post brought among

others a letter from Gildon to Louisa, dated in Philadelphia. He stated that he had travelled without stopping to that place, and a delay of two or three hours enabled him to say to his "beloved, angelic Louisa," how much he suffered in her absence—how flat, insignificant, and worthless all that he met with appeared, when she was away; that her looks, and manner, and air, and words, were always fresh in his recollection—as were also those scenes where she had given him assurances of her affection. He begged her to write to him by every post—hoped he should be able to return sooner than he contemplated when they parted, as absence grew more and more insupportable; with much more to the same purpose, which, though very common, place, was read again and again with fresh delight by Louisa, after she had read them often enough to repeat every word from memory.

This precious proof of his faith and affection, after being shewn to her mother

(as he had put nothing in it from which his visit to Stanley could be known), was then deposited in her bosom, from whence she was often seen by Matilda to withdraw it, and after giving it a sly kiss, return it to its lovely sanctuary.

Mrs. Grayson was gratified at the warm sentiments of love this letter contained, though they would have been more to her taste if they had been expressed with more simplicity, and a less studied elegance. She was willing, however, to make allowances for the reigning fashion of florid and inflated writing, in which it was usual to avoid all natural modes of expression as tame and feeble.

Louisa readily complied with her lover's request of writing to him—for his will had now become a law to her; and she accordingly addressed a letter to him in New-York, thanking him for his letter, and avowing her affection in terms of great tenderness. But her epistle throughout exhibited an air of sadness and gloomy

foreboding, which she could not conceal, and yet felt unwilling to confess.

This letter of Gildon's, nevertheless, had a very cheering effect on her spirits, and, as a natural consequence, was proportionally beneficial to Mrs. Grayson, and furthered her convalescence. She devoted so much of her time to making arrangements for the approaching sale, that she had not inquired into the particulars of her daughter's visit, as she would otherwise have done; and consequently Louisa was not so much subjected to the pain that unwarranted concealment must ever give to an ingenuous mind, educated in such strict principles of integrity. She sought too, by her mother's earnest recommendation, the advantage of employment; she also wrote to Matilda almost daily notes; and set herself seriously about learning those household arts which she had hitherto utterly neglected, but which the altered circumstances of her family made indispensable, while she continued under her mother's roof; and which the

too probable refusal of Gildon's father to his marriage would make equally necessary if she should become his wife. These several occupations so filled up her time, that she found little leisure to indulge the painful, harrowing thoughts that would sometimes obtrude themselves, and present to her imagination a horrible abyss, into which she was about to be precipitated. The society of Fanny Buckley, whose attachment to her seemed to increase with her unhappiness, and which that unsuspecting girl imputed as much to the change in the circumstances of her family as to her anxiety about her lover, no longer afforded her any pleasure—for she could not converse with her on what alone created any interest in her mind.

Of all those who had flocked to Beachwood, to congratulate Mrs. Grayson on her recovery, there was no one who took more heartfelt delight in so doing, or was more cordially received, than their worthy neighbour M'Culloch.

"My good madam," said he, approaching the easy chair on which Mrs. Grayson sat, and offering his hand, "I could put off seeing you no longer, though you, or these young ladies, must push me out of the room the moment I am likely to fatigue you. But where is my Rose of Sharon?"

Louisa, hearing the voice of her old friend, came running in from the dining-room; and he not only shook her by the hand, but gave her one or two kisses, that might have been heard in every room in the house. He then held her off at arm's length, to see if he could perceive in her face any indications of the ague and fever with which the lower country was always associated in his mind; and this examination, by the train of ideas it excited, bringing the blood into her cheeks, he declared, with great satisfaction, that for once she had escaped it.—"I believe," said he, "your kinsman's place, madam, is one of the healthiest in the Northern Neck. And how many of the Buckahoes

have those blushes and dimples slaughtered? Some scores, I will warrant."

Louisa, anxious to give the conversation another turn, inquired about Mrs. M'Culloch, and reproached him for not bringing her with him.

"The old lady considers me so boisterous, and was so fearful of my fatiguing your good mamma, that she wanted me to wait until to-morrow; but for once I ventured to disobey her, and I shall be sure to pay for it in a certain lecture. Girls, if you want to know how to govern your husbands, take a lesson from the old lady."

"I do not know indeed a better model," said Mrs. Grayson; "but if she rules, it is by never seeking to rule."

He looked thoughtful for a moment, and with more seriousness than was customary with him, said—"I believe you have it, madam; and it is the only way a husband worth having can be governed."

Bella now proclaimed that a gentleman was coming up the lane, and in a little

while Primus came to the door, and said that Mr. Hatchett wished to see his mistress.

Mrs. Grayson seeming to hesitate, M'Culloch offered to go out and learn of him his business. He accordingly went into the parlour, and found the old usurer in the same rhubarb-coloured coat and breeches, but a thicker waistcoat, to suit the slight change of the season. M'Culloch never disguised his contemptuous feelings.

"How fares it, old Hard-times? You are not aware, I presume, that the good lady of the house has just risen from the bed of sickness?"

"I was apprized of it, Mr. M'Culloch, but my business is pressing, and cannot be put off."

"Hoot, man! are you to learn that business must give way to sickness? Would you fatigue this worthy lady about that eternal compromise, which after all I predict you will never agree to?"

"Every man, Mr. M'Culloch, under-



stands his own business best, or thinks he does. It is to give her notice, that a claim on her late husband has been assigned to me, and to know of her if she has any offset or discount against it."

"Whose bond is it, and what is the amount?"

"It is to Sam Slocum, who was colonel Grayson's overseer, for one hundred and eighty dollars."

"What! has that rascal sold you his bond already? It has been but a few weeks since he settled his account; and this is the mighty and important matter for which you would push that amiable and benevolent face of yours into the chamber of a sick lady! Suppose you were not to have given this notice to-day, could it not have been done as well to-morrow, or next day, or next week? Or if you had not given it at all, Joe could have made it good to you. Nay, even if you had lost it altogether, would you ever have felt it, or missed it, or even known it, except by your ledger? And yet you

could find it in your heart to torment this worthy lady about such a trifle! For shame, man! If you have no bowels, at least keep up a show of decency!"

"You have your way, Mr. McCulloch, and I have mine. I don't interfere with you when you choose to waste your time or your substance, and I don't see what right you have to meddle with me for husbanding mine. I have borne your flouts long enough, and I have put up with them because I love peace. But since, in spite of all I can do, you are ridiculing and insulting me whenever we meet, I hope you will pay me what you owe me before you make so free, unless you mean always to be more liberal of your hard words than of your money."

"And do you pretend to censure me, miscreant—you, who have not the soul of an oyster—because I have used that money which you by rapacity amass, and have not the spirit to spend? I am able, thank God, to pay you, but I shall be in no hurry to do so. I have other credi-

ters, whose claims, upon every principle of honour and justice, are superior to yours; and if you do not choose to wait my time, you may sue and be d——d." So saying, he left him, and returned to Mrs. Grayson.

M'Culloch was not without some fears; in the midst of his resentment against Hatchett, that he had lost all hold upon the money-lender's forbearance, and that his long-deferred removal to the west would be precipitated somewhat sooner than he wished, by his bitter raillery of that morning.

### CHAPTER III

\*\*\*\*\*

ON Matilda's return to the Elms, she found Frederick Steener there, though he had lately spent the chief part of his time on his own estate, and in making preparations for his marriage with Susan Tid-

ball. He was also disposed to look a little more closely into the accounts of his guardian, in consequence of the advice which had been given him by old Tidball. This investigation was one of great labour to poor Frederick, and he had come down to ask explanations of his uncle.

He took the earliest occasion of informing his cousin Matilda, that when at Lexington he had seen a gentleman just from Williamsburg, who mentioned that Edward Grayson was thought a very promising young man, and a fine genius, though a little eccentric; and that two young ladies were pulling caps for him; one very pretty, but without fortune, the other not handsome, but very rich, and very accomplished; and that as his father's estate would be absorbed in paying its debts, it was generally supposed that he would marry Miss Allen.

Matilda had uncommon firmness of mind, as well as clearness of judgment, and she did not allow herself for a moment to believe there was any shadow of

ground for the latter part of the report; yet no rumour of this kind ever yet reached the ears of a lover without causing some uneasiness.

She kept up a regular correspondence with Edward; and meaning to write the next day to confirm her former statement of his mother's recovery, she mentioned these reports as examples of the false rumours that malignant or inconsiderate people were constantly putting in circulation; and that it should be a warning to both not to credit any thing that was inconsistent with the good opinion they entertained of each other.

Frederick, who had never taken the possibility of the report being untrue into calculation, was ready enough now to admit it, and even was confident of its falsity, as soon as it was suggested. He therefore did not afterwards mention it to his aunt, who would not have failed to avail herself of it to renew her persecutions of her daughter, with better arguments than she had hitherto been furnished with. The truth

was, that Edward boarded in the house of a Mrs. Robertson, of genteel connexions, and once in easy circumstances, but who, after the death of her husband, had settled herself in Williamsburg, for the purpose of having her children well educated at a moderate expence; and the better to enable her to effect her purpose, she accommodated with board three or four young men who were well recommended to her.

Edward's handsome person, the dignity of his manners, his serious and even pensive air, and his very polite deportment, all concurred to make him uncommonly interesting to the youngest of her daughters. At a ball given soon after his arrival, this young lady seemed to claim his particular attentions; for, as they were inmates in the same house, and she was without a partner, he danced with her.

This was sufficient to produce some bantering, and some little chitchat with the gossips of the place, until, by degrees, it made him her declared lover.

As soon as Edward discovered the fact,

which was not the case until it was known by the whole household, he acted with all the delicacy and propriety he was capable of; not suddenly withdrawing his attentions, but endeavouring imperceptibly to give them a character of mere friendship, in a way that could not be mistaken. He even went further, and on finding her alone one afternoon at her instrument, he intimated--what indeed she had heard, but was willing to believe was not true--that his affections were engaged in Frederick.

It was also a fact, that Harriet Allen, who had come to pass the winter in Williamsburg, and who was the heiress of a large estate in Prince George, had again and again declared herself more pleased with Edward Grayson than with any young man she had seen in the old city. The hairdresser who attended Edward (for at that time every student of William and Mary had his hairdresser), had a wife at the house where Miss Allen was staying, and her maid communicated these civil and commendatory speeches to Chloe,

the barber's wife, who transmitted them to her husband, who in time entertained his young customers with them, together with other intelligence of the same character, and was particularly forward in making them known to him to whom he thought they would be most acceptable.

Edward, who had felt nothing but regret at the report with Miss Robertson, was mortified and displeased at this new disposal of him, to which these flattering speeches of a wealthy heiress quickly gave rise. He could never tolerate the idea of being a fortune-hunter; and one cause of his forbearing to press his suit with Matilda, had been that he wished to avoid the imputation of being influenced by her fortune. He was therefore remarkably distant and reserved in the intercourse he necessarily had with this young lady, as they often met at the same social dinner, and at the evening parties of the city. But as he was known to be a reserved young man, and was really nothing of a coxcomb, the coldness with which he met her ad-



vances was attributed to sheer modesty, and had the effect of making the young lady indicate her preference yet more plainly—especially as the flattery and attentions she had been in the habit of receiving would not let her suspect that her favour could be a matter of indifference to any young man.

But the fortune and the forwardness of one, no more than the beauty and silent attachment of the other, ever made his fidelity to Matilda waver for a moment; nor did he know that any person ever seriously believed those reports, which, whenever they were mentioned in the way of idle banter, he always promptly and flatly contradicted.

He felt then the pride of conscious rectitude when he received Matilda's letter, though he could not but regret that such reports should have reached her ears, knowing how much a similar rumour respecting even Frederick Steener had formerly distressed himself. He immediately wrote an answer to her letter, from

which it may not be amiss to make the following extract:—

“ I thank you, dearest Matilda, for discrediting the idle reports which have reached your ears. I wrote you that I was boarding with a Mrs. Robertson, an amiable lady, in decayed circumstances, who had a daughter about sixteen; and as she is really a pretty, modest, amiable girl, and it devolved on me sometimes to escort her home from the little parties to which we were both invited, it was enough, in a place like this, where nothing of more moment occurs than the concerns of students and young ladies, to give rise to the report. But as soon as I heard it, and perceived that the young lady had also heard it, I lost no time in preventing the injury which such reports may prove to the character or prospects of a female; I sought an opportunity to let her know, without hurting her pride, that I entertained no such views; and I did what I hope you will deem pardonable—I partially made her my confidant, and imparted to her the secret of my attach-

ment. She is really an amiable girl; and so far from appearing to feel herself slighted, she seemed flattered by this mark of my confidence, and to feel a lively interest in my fortunes: so that I trust all danger of the mischief I most apprehend is now at an end, and the idle reports you have heard will soon die away. As to the great heiress, Miss Allen, I have never once either walked, danced, or been alone with that young lady, and cannot account for so silly and strange a rumour. It is true I have several times been in her company, and it seemed to be assumed as a thing of course that I should have no objection to an estate in Prince George, with two hundred negroes, now that I have lost my own; and that, as she was pleased to bestow on me some trifling compliments, I should be found to join in the throng of worshippers at the shrine of Mammon. But if my heart, my dearest Matilda, had not been altogether thine, this young lady could never have interested it. She is not only not handsome, but has a confidence

in her deportment towards our sex, and an air of haughty superciliousness towards her own, that are extremely displeasing. This tale will be forgotten of course when it is seen that I pursue the same distant course as ever; though I apprehend the young lady will soon put an end to all such reports herself, by marrying some one of three or four of our collegians who are besieging her with their attentions. I feel very grateful to my friend Frederick for his seasonable agency, and have, in the letter which encloses this, written him that I will, one of these days, do his law business for nothing. I have applied myself so assiduously to my studies, that habit has made them agreeable; and the thought of the prize which is to reward my labours animates me to new exertion, and makes a study, otherwise tasteless enough, at once light and pleasant. In the spring, I hope to obtain a licence, and then, if I do not succeed, it will be the fault of dame Nature, who may not have furnished me with the qualifications, and not for want

of my own diligence in study, punctual attention to business, and faithful discharge of my duty. I trust by the next post I shall hear that Frederick is married; but I know not whether I ought much to rejoice, as some other must be substituted in his place, when he is out of the way, to beset you and torture me. I wonder I have never had a line from Gildon since we parted. He must have been in New-York for two or three weeks. I am uneasy at his silence. I know his relish for pleasure and society, and sometimes fear that the same facility of yielding to its seductions that has made him forget his promise of writing to me, may make him forget his professions to my sister. If he were capable of doing so, he would not deserve that she should bestow a thought on him; but I fear she could not be brought to see the matter in this light. It seems to me, my dear Matilda, as if there could be no lasting attachment that is not founded altogether on esteem. Let me know whether Louisa hears from him; and watch

over the happiness of that too-amiable, unsuspecting girl. You have my warmest thanks, my beloved Matilda, for your kind attentions to my dear mother; she speaks of your services in the strongest terms that her grateful heart can inspire, and says that to your prudent counsels she owes her life. How much does my heart exult, to hear such praises bestowed on you, by one whose praise is always so just! and what visions of bliss does it call up, when I think that the virtue and excellence which are now the theme of every tongue; I may one day be able to call my own! The idea intoxicates me; I can no longer think, I can only feel, and bid you a fond and abrupt adieu."

Matilda felt greatly relieved on receiving this letter; for though touching the subject that was nearest to her heart, she found nothing in it of which she was not previously convinced, yet still there was a pleasure in having the assurances of her lover's fidelity under his own hand; especially when it was so seasoned with the

liberal commendations of herself. There were however some passages in the letter, with which she was not entirely pleased, and, according to her practice, she began her answer when her impressions were fresh and lively. It was as follows:—

—◆—

*Elms, November 1796.*

“ I was sure my esteemed and valued friend would confirm the opinion which my knowledge of his character had induced me to form, by telling me that the silly reports I mentioned were false. The young lady must now be convinced that the hopes, if she ever entertained any, are unfounded, and nobody will long believe the idle tale; yet I cannot but think it unfortunate that you should have established yourself in a boarding-house, where the attentions which mere civility would exact from you towards the young lady would be some interruption to your studies, besides exposing you to such ridiculous reports; but I suppose

you do not wish to hurt their feelings by quitting them just at this time. I am not sure you did right in making her your confidant. It is a delicate office between a gay cavalier and so pretty, modest, and amiable a young lady; for if you are sure it is not dangerous to yourself, are you sure it may not be so to her? There is something very soothing, I admit, in her sympathy; but really I doubt whether both you and she would not be as well without it.—As for that haughty miss, who is content to receive the homage to her wealth which her charms cannot command, I think you are in no sort of danger; though I think she has given proof of her having the recommendation of a good taste, as well as a fine fortune.—Your excellent mamma is now quite recovered, thanks to the skill of doctor Blodget, to whom, under Heaven, the credit is due, though she would generously give a large share of it to me, who am entitled to no more than the horse which brought him. She not only looks better.



than before, but I think is in better spirits, especially since she saw worthy Mr. Trueheart, who, besides making a favourable report on the state of her affairs, told her some handsome things of you. You see of how much importance is your success.—Louisa has received a very long letter from Mr. Gildon, which will be food for her meditations until she receives another. She is, however, very melancholy, in spite of his protestations and assurances, and I am half angry, half alarmed, to see her so wanting in firmness. If any thing should happen to prevent his return, I dread the consequences. Do you know, I sometimes have my fears; Heaven forbid there should be any foundation for them! I always thought your friend wanted stability of character, and to say the truth, I never had any great liking to habitual jokers. His conduct has been a little ambiguous of late, and his letters have a laboured elegance, that shews the heart has little to do in dictating them; but I check these fears when

I recollect that he is your friend. Fanny Buckley mentioned the other day, in mamma's presence, Mr. Trueheart's report of you, and I watched her countenance, but she said nothing, and I was not able to discover whether she was pleased or otherwise. Is not this a symptom that she is relenting? My father exulted, and said he always predicted you would be a credit to the county. So you see here is another reason why you should be diligent in your studies, and not suffer yourself to be drawn aside by 'pretty, modest, and amiable young ladies.' Oh, Edward, I often laugh, to keep myself from weeping. Let us hope for the best. Farewell, and remember your own

“MATILDA.”

---

When Edward read this letter, it appeared to him, for the first time, that he had been injudicious in selecting his lodgings, and that he ought certainly to change them; and the rather as the susceptible

girl with whom he lived, whose partiality for Edward was mainly founded on her admiration of his manly character and noble dignity of manners, was so far from being discouraged by the secret he had confided to her, that she felt herself flattered and honoured by the distinction. Without making any calculations about the future, she yielded herself up to the pleasure of being in his company, and of conversing with him for the little time that he could remain with the family. Hoping for nothing more, she sought, and scarcely wished for greater happiness, though to Edward the subject had been for some time a cause of serious uneasiness.

During then a short interval, in which the professor of law was attending the meeting of the general court in November, he went to Easton; and on his return he determined to lodge in the college, and to eat at a boarding-house hard by, alleging that he wished (as was the

case) to have a readier access to the college library.

Mrs. Robertson, though not remarkable for her penetration, knew of her daughter's partiality for Edward, and took it for granted that it met with encouragement, or was one of those growing intimacies which, at that place, one or two winters are very apt to mature into marriage. Feeling great personal respect for Edward, on account of his good breeding, his family, and his misfortunes, she already began to regard him as a son-in-law, and was greatly surprised at this intimation.—  
“ I am afraid something has happened, Mr. Grayson.”

“ Nothing, madam, I assure you ; on the contrary, I feel myself greatly obliged by the kind reception I have ever met with in your house.”

At this moment her daughter entering the room, Mrs. Robertson said—“ Nancy, did you know Mr. Grayson was going to leave us ?”

Nancy, taken thus by surprise, turned

pale with alarm, and could with difficulty articulate—"No, madam, I did not know it."

"He is going to board in college."

This afforded the poor girl great relief, as she had at first supposed he meant to quit Williamsburg. Recovering herself, she forced a smile, and said—"I am sorry we cannot accommodate Mr. Grayson to his taste."

He then repeated the reasons he had given before, on hearing which she felt greatly consoled. The good lady expressed a wish to see him often, and invited him to come and drink tea with them, whenever he was not more agreeably engaged. He endeavoured to excuse himself, alleging that his present course of study would allow him little leisure, but that there was no house in Williamsburg he should take more pleasure in visiting.

Both the mother and daughter appeared to be greatly gratified at this remark, and they all parted very good friends.

He procured of the college steward a bed, with other necessary chamber furniture; and by the assistance of old Lemon, one of the slaves then belonging to the college, and whose oyster suppers are fresh in the recollection of numbers now living, he was soon rendered comfortable. He boarded at a house in the neighbourhood, where indeed he missed the nice muffins of Mrs. Robertson in the morning, her soup and stews at dinner, and crisp biscuits in the evening; but, on the other hand, his studies experienced no interruption. He could come and go when he pleased, and he knew it would gratify Matilda, who, it was clear, had thought he had been a little too warm in his praises of Miss Robertson.

Among the young men who boarded at the same house was Richard Mawly, who had formed a great intimacy with Gildon. They were both wits—both epicures—both had rather lax notions on some points of morality. They were, in short, both men of pleasure; but Maw-

ly's face was as harsh and disagreeable as Gildon's was handsome; and he had, moreover, great perverseness and obstinacy of temper. He had taken an early dislike to Edward, whom he called a moral prig; and as every man instinctively finds out his friends and enemies, Edward soon perceived his ill will, and returned it with undisguised scorn.

In this state of feeling nothing was wanting but an occasion to bring these youths to an open rupture. Gildon had written to Mawly two or three times since he had reached New-York, and as the latter was apprized of Gildon's attachment to Louisa Grayson, and of his father's opposition, he never lost an opportunity of communicating to his companions every thing which made it probable that the match would be broken off; nor did he fail to hint at the disagreeable qualities of Edward; as he called them, and dwelt at length on the approaching downfall of the family.

In Gildon's last letter there were some

expressions which seemed to warrant the inference that he was coquetting, if nothing more, with Miss De Peyster; and on the strength of this, Mawly took occasion to mention at the dinner-table his belief that Gildon would, after all, be married to his old sweetheart. Edward saw the malice of the remark, and was at first disposed to resent what he considered an aspersion of an absent friend; but as Gildon was not actually engaged to his sister, he did not feel himself warranted in going that length, especially as the silence of Gildon had created some painful suspicions of his good faith. His first impulse was to cast a look of disdain towards Mawly, and the next to look away. The poisoned shaft, however, hit the point it was aimed at. Edward, after making allowances for the malignity of Mawly, thought he would hardly have ventured to go so far without some real ground; and in his next letter to Matilda, he mentioned the report, and his feelings on the occasion, but cautioned her about repeating it at Beachwood.



Let us now return to the gentle, but imprudent Louisa. Every Saturday she looked with anxiety for a letter from her lover; and though she was sometimes disappointed, yet the following week brought an apology for the omission, so studded with professions of love, and with ecstatic praises of his mistress, that her forgiveness was readily obtained. These omissions had been of more frequent recurrence of late, but still the following post had continued to bring the explanation. From the time that Primus was set off to Battletown till his return, she thought of nothing but the letter she expected. She was generally stationed at the window a half-hour before his arrival; and sometimes, when she was not noticed, or noticed only by her mother, she would walk up the lane leading to the house to meet him. She had done so one evening about this time, and having asked Primus for the letters and papers, and eagerly run over them, she found several for her mother, but not one for herself.

"Are these all, Primus?" said she in a faint voice.

"Yes, Miss Louisa, there's all."

"Look in your pockets," said she.

"There was five, Miss Louisa," replied Primus.

She found the number right.

"Perhaps he has not sent mine?"

"Lord, Miss Louisa! Mr. Taylor always sends your letters; and the young man who keeps the office says—'Here's one for your young mistress;' and sometimes—'Here's one from New-York;' but when I asked him if there was one for you, he looked again, and said—'No, I reckon the gentleman does not write, because he is coming himself.'"

Louisa felt mortified amid her disappointment that she had discovered so much anxiety as to expose her feelings to this servant, who it was clear, as well as the postmaster, seemed to be well acquainted with the relation in which she stood to Gildon. She walked on, much

depressed, and delivered the letters to her mother.

They were all on business, but one of them was from Trueheart. Mrs. Grayson, after reading this letter, handed it to her daughter, saying — “ Though this worthy man is sufficiently occupied with his own and other people’s business to distract a weaker head, yet he gives more full and satisfactory answers to my inquiries than some who have nothing else to do. It was but last week that I wrote him the long letter to which this is a reply. A friend in need is a friend indeed. How should we get along without this capable and kind adviser ?”

Louisa, engrossed by her disappointment, heeded not what her mother said; and mechanically taking the letter, and holding it in her hand, her eyes ran over the lines, without comprehending any thing of their meaning.

“ On what credit does he think the poor negroes should be sold ?” said Mrs. Grayson.

“ Madam !—Yes.”

“ They will sell so much lower for cash. What length of credit does he recommend ?”

“ I do not see it, madam,” said Louisa, recalled to herself; and after reading nearly half the letter, for the first time she found that he mentioned a credit of one or two years.

“ Is any thing the matter, Louisa? you seem very abstracted. Have you received any intelligence ?”

“ No, madam.”

“ Are you sûre ?” said her mother.

“ There came for me no letter, mamma ; at least Primus brought me none.”

“ You expected one, I presume ?”

“ I thought it was probable I should receive one.”

Her mother now perceived the cause of her anxiety, and without seeming to notice the circumstance at the time, she endeavoured to inculcate the necessity of fortitude and patience under misfortune; and above all she determined to engage

her daughter's mind busily in domestic occupations, until she should regain that portion of tranquillity she had recently possessed.

When another week had slipped around, Primus was again sent off as before, and Louisa's anxiety was now so increased, that she trembled when she asked him for the letter. The arch boy said—"There's a letter for you now, Miss Louisa."

She looked over the parcel in his hand, and immediately recognising the well-known hand, she seized it, and hastily pressed it to her lips before she broke the seal. But it was not that healing balm her devoted heart craved, and so fondly expected. After a long detail of the various interruptions which had prevented him from writing in time for the post on the last week, and the week before, and the most vehement declarations of the strength of his passion, he said—"I have been endeavouring to make arrangements to be with you by Christmas, as I expected; for believe me, my most adorable

Louisa, nothing but necessity could control the impatience of my heart to be once more with you; but circumstances, which it would be tedious to unfold, will not enable me to set out till some time in the spring, by which time I shall return to Frederick, on the wings of love; and hope then to be able to call you mine wholly and for ever. I shall know little peace of mind till then, and nothing but this sweet hope could support me under the cruel privation. I have now not a shadow of expectation that any thing can soften the obduracy of my father; but while he does all in his power to make me miserable, I do not see that I am obliged to unite with him to the same end. I shall therefore feel myself justified in seeking my happiness in the only way in which it can be attained, which is in the possession of the fairest and sweetest of nature's works. Assist me, adored Louisa, to beguile this tedious interval of its weariness;" with a good deal more of the same stamp.

Though her joy at getting a letter was

greatly damped by learning that her lover had postponed his return, yet she was so soothed by his tender assurances, and had so much confidence in his affection, that she believed his protracted absence to be necessary, and lamented it only as an unavoidable misfortune.

The secret anxiety which had been preying on the mind of this lovely girl, had now visibly affected her appearance. Her colour had nearly left her cheek, her eyes were hollow, and the whole of her air and manner was languid and drooping, so as to be noticed by all the servants, even by Granny Moll, who, attributing the change partly to regret for the absence of her lover, and partly to the prospect of leaving the family seat of her ancestors, endeavoured to cheer her with such arguments of consolation as occurred to her. She would banter her about pining so much before marriage; and asked her how she would do when she had a husband, if he went to the wars, as her father had done, or to foreign countries, or even

away to Kentuck or New-York, and be gone five or six months. She endeavoured too to find some consolation for the loss of the estate; but this was a sore subject to the old woman herself, as well as to all the servants, and she made but a lame hand as a comforter; she however told Louisa she had no doubt that her young mistress and that pretty young man would ride in their coach; as his father, they said, was very rich; and thus she touched on a string of all others least likely to give a cheering or soothing sound.—“As for mistress,” said she, “poor soul, since master’s death, a little would do for her; and master Edward was born to be a great man, and would make his fortune by the law, as old lawyer Scrip, and Mr. Trueheart,” and many others whom she enumerated.

The old woman’s cabin had indeed always been a favourite place of resort to Louisa; and she had found it more grateful than ever, since Granny Moll invariably introduced the subject that her know-



ledge of her sex taught her was the most acceptable topic on which she could speak.

“ And do you really think so highly of him, Granny ?” would she sometimes ask, well knowing what the answer would be, but never tired of hearing it.

After receiving the letter, which she shewed to her mother, who was unwilling to disclose the apprehensions it suggested, Louisa was desirous of paying her promised visit to Matilda, and of shewing her the letter.

#### CHAPTER IV.

~~~~~

THE next day old Phill was directed to get the carriage to go to the Elms, a visit which he would gladly have declined, as the servants were now aware that they, with the rest of the property, were soon to be sold, and they felt the mortifying re-

verse the more severely, when they were compelled to witness the new-born wealth of their ostentatious neighbours, where pride of purse was felt as much, and shewn as plainly, by the servants, as by their haughty and ambitious mistress. As however he was to make a drive, perhaps for the last time, he determined to put his best foot foremost; and little Ben and himself were employed the evening before in cleaning the harness, scrubbing the carriage, and giving to every thing the most glossy and polished appearance. He felt keenly for the honour of the family, now about to be shorn of its beams; for he had all his life been accustomed to pride himself on its consequence, and make a boast of its wealth too, when his master was as superior to his neighbours in fortune as in dignity and standing.

So tediously minute was he in his preparations, that it was past eleven before they set off. It was however a good day, not a cloud intercepted the soft and grateful warmth of the autumnal sun. The

rich foliage which had lately painted the mountain forest with all the brighter hues had now disappeared, and the few leaves which were yet to be seen were dried and straggling, except those that were to be seen on a few scattered pines. The trees along the river, lately impervious to the sun, were stripped of their leaves, which now formed a soft bed for the horses' feet, and occasioned a rustling sound as the carriage drove over them.

The whole of the road, which she had not travelled before since her return, reminded her of her lover, and of the rapturous delight with which she had listened to his "flattering tale." Not a turn of the way, a remarkable tree, a bend in the river, or view of the distant mountains, but brought to her recollection some of those fond scenes, which, after they are passed, differ so widely from the common concerns of life, and are so bedecked with the brightest hues of the imagination, as to have at once the strangeness of a dream,

and yet greater freshness in the memory than belongs to our waking perceptions.

Her thoughts then wandered still further back, and she remembered a yet earlier period of time, when, in the careless gaiety of childhood, she rambled along this road with her brother, to meet Matilda, or to accompany her part of the way home, sometimes on foot and sometimes on horseback, when her mind was free from care or disguise, her heart filled with benevolence and affection, and she was innocent and happy. Her present wretchedness then appeared the greater by the force of contrast; and such she thought are the wretched consequences of imprudent love, of disingenuous concealment, and disobedience to the best of parents.

Matilda had been expecting her friend, and had walked up the avenue to meet her, and to enjoy the fine day. Louisa alighted from the carriage when they met, and the two friends walked together arm in arm towards the house.

Mrs. Fawkner's fears of an alliance with

the Graysons had been much moderated by Edward's absence; and finding that her daughter's firmness was not to be shaken, and that her plan with Frederick Steener was in a fair way of being frustrated, she had not objected to an intercourse with the families; and began to think, that if Edward should realize the predictions of his friends, though he might not be a fit match for Matilda, as he wanted what she deemed most essential, yet he might be tolerated, rather than an only daughter should be consigned to an unprotected celibacy. She therefore received Louisa with more cordiality than she had shewn for some time before; and indeed her wan and pallid countenance was calculated to soften a yet more unfeeling heart than Mrs. Fawkner's. She imputed Louisa's evident dejection of spirits to the impending sale of the estate, and endeavoured, with more of compassion than of delicacy, to say something consoling—as, that we were all liable to changes, that Fortune's

wheel might soon take another turn, and that she heard Barbawl say, that if some of the claims belonging to the estate were properly managed, they would produce something handsome to the family after all, though (she added immediately afterwards) it might be that Barbawl only wanted to get himself into business.

Louisa's depression was too deep to be reached by the consolations or admonitions of her who used them. They were received in silence. Major Fawkner was really pleased to see her, and he had several times of late ventured to hint to his partner, that Matilda's unfortunate attachment seemed incurable, that it had already seemed to have an effect on her health and spirits, and that if Edward should succeed at the bar, as seemed not unreasonable, he would be able to take care of the estate, if not improve it. He even went further, and supposed the no very improbable case (considering the character of their daughter), of her dying unmarried

and childless, and of their estate going to Frederick Steener and the Tidhalls.

This idea the good lady could not for a moment tolerate. She denied that Matilda was ever in better health, and said that she had seen girls bent on throwing themselves away, but being prevented from doing so by their more prudent parents, take on a good deal at first, and in a few years bless their stars, and the considerate caution of their friends, for the advantages of a more suitable match. If indeed, she added, Edward should become a great lawyer, there would not be so much objection to him, but she never "reckoned her chickens before they were hatched." As to Frederick, if he threw himself away upon such "trash" (one of her favourite terms of contempt) as the Tidhalls, he not only should never inherit a penny of her money, even if she had to give it to the poor, but should never set foot in her doors again.

After sitting about half an hour with

the old people, Louisa asked Matilda to take a walk with her in the garden. The spot where Gildon had first made his declaration of love was viewed by her with the liveliest emotion. She then shewed her friend his last letter, and asked her candid opinion on the reasons he gave for delaying his return.

Matilda read over the letter again and again, and it was now too plain to her, that from some motive of ambition, or from the influence of his father, or perhaps the mere love of change, he was paving the way to break off the connexion altogether; but she had not the heart to communicate her opinion. She however told Louisa, that as her lover's return had been thus unexpectedly prevented, it might, from the same or a similar cause, be still further delayed, and advised her to prepare herself for the worst.—“Follow my example, my dear Louisa,” said she; “I believe I am as devoted in affection as it is in the power of you or any other woman to be; and yet I am always acting

and preparing my mind as if your brother and I were never again to meet. I never can consent to be his but on terms which will subject neither of us to repentance, or the reproaches of the other; and if the difficulties that now present themselves to our union can be removed, our bliss will of course be so much the greater. We shall enjoy our haven of rest the more for the tempests we have encountered in reaching it."

"Oh, Matilda, what you say is perfectly reasonable and proper," cried Louisa, "but it is beyond my feeble powers. I can admire your fortitude, but cannot imitate it. There is the same difference between us, as between this convolvulus that withers at the first approach of frost, and yonder perpetual rose that defies its utmost rigour. I am a poor weak mortal, unable to struggle with those sorrows which I fear fate has in store for me. Oh, my dear Matilda, tell me that they do not await me, rather than vainly attempt to teach me how to bear them. Can he be

inconstant? Is this the language of the heart? Does he write as one who is pouring out his whole soul? I sometimes think he does not express himself as he used to do; and then again I think my fears have misled me. Tell me, Matilda, you whose perceptions, always clear, are not blinded by the same passions which agitate me, tell me what you think?—I see you hesitate. You think him false.—Oh God! look down upon a miserable sinner, pity and forgive her errors, and receive her into thy merciful bosom, ere this cruel suspicion be confirmed!—But no, it cannot be—you are prejudiced, Matilda; I think you never appreciated Gideon justly; you judged of him by my brother, without considering the different dispositions of men; you intimated once he was selfish—I could give you the strongest proofs of his generosity, and charity, and beneficence; but which is the part which makes you distrust him?”

“My dear Louisa,” said Matilda, striving to appear calm, “moderate your feelings,

and call in the aid of the good sense you possess. Do not magnify evils unnecessarily—do not add to the distress of your excellent mother, who has already had her full share of trouble, and who affords you a bright example of heavenly patience, under trials with which yours cannot be compared. I have no particular reason to distrust Gildon's fidelity more than yourself; and if a doubt has arisen, it is merely a sudden suspicion, and you may be right and I wrong; all I wish to inculcate is, that it is our duty, in difficult situations, to prepare for the worst; and if your lover should——”

“ Oh, do not name it,” said Louisa, interrupting her; “ the thought is insupportable; the misfortune would be greater than you are aware of.” Here she paused, hesitating whether she should proceed or not; and Matilda, waiting an explanation of her mysterious expressions—“ But,” she added, “ I could not survive it.”

“ My dear Louisa, it pains me to see you possessed of so little fortitude; I sin-

cerely hope you may have no greater occasion for it than you have had. But one can hardly expect to pass through life without great trials; and upon our own account, as well as for the sake of those whose happiness is dear to us, we should learn the severe duty of resignation. Misfortune is, indeed, the only effectual instructress; but I believe we may so prepare our minds, as to lessen the severity of her discipline."

"What then would you have me do?" said Louisa in a tone of complaint.

"I would have you," replied the other, "contemplate the worst that can happen, and determine on a course of conduct which you will steadfastly pursue. I would have you prepare, in any contingency which can befall you, to do your duty to your best of parents and to yourself. I would have you to remember, that if your lover is capable of deserting you, it must be either that he never loved you, or that he sacrifices his love at the shrine of ava-

rice and ambition—in either of which cases he deserves not your regard.”

“ Oh, Matilda, you talk like one who had learnt love only out of books. Can you erase from the heart the image which is engraven on it? Can you at your will and pleasure banish from your mind all the recollections of the past, all the fond hopes of the future, which have occupied your thoughts by day and by night, for weeks and months? Can you possibly loathe and despise what you lately loved and admired? Can you pluck from the heart that which gave it life and motion? You can do it only by plucking away life itself. To tell me not to love Gildon, is to tell me not to live; and to tell me that he does not love me, is yet more cruel.”

“ Far be it from me,” said Matilda, “ to suggest such a thing. I never doubted that he did love you passionately; and if he did, so much do I agree with you on the force of the passion, that I must believe he loves you still. But I was mere-

ly arguing that his love might be overpowered by other temptations, or by the influence of his friends; and granting these suppositions to be extremely improbable; as I admit them to be, I was merely considering how you ought to act, if they were to prove well founded, without meaning to express an opinion on their probability. But since you think yourself incapable of supporting such a trial, in which however you do yourself injustice, and moreover do not suppose it possible, I see not why you should be so much distressed at the letter. It is comparatively of little importance whether Gildon comes in December or April."

Louisa looked distressed and embarrassed.—"Yes, but I dreaded what might intervene. I did not know——" and with a violence of emotion she could not control, and which alarmed Matilda, she burst into a flood of tears, and said—"Oh, Matilda, I am ruined in my own estimation, let what will happen! I am a lost being—I am unworthy of your friendship."

Matilda listened with amazement, and feared at first her friend's intellects were disordered; but after sobbing and weeping plentifully, she, with much hesitation and embarrassment, intimated the apprehended consequences. Her culpable weakness, and her contrition and sufferings, seemed so acute, that Matilda, after the first shock was over, used her best endeavour to calm her troubled spirits, and to offer the best consolations that sympathizing friendship could suggest.

While this lovely young creature, like a tender flower nipped by a too early frost, was pining under the heart sickness of disappointed hope, her mother was meekly bowing to the will of Heaven, and endeavouring to support herself against some of its heaviest dispensations. The evening before the sale, Mr. Trueheart arrived at Beachwood, in company with a man of genteel appearance, apparently about thirty. He was met by old Phill, with a sorrowful face, as he passed near the stable, where the ancient domestic had been brushing up

the carriage, to make it shew to the best advantage, for the credit both of the house and its coachman.—“ My daughter Patty,” said he, “ wants to know of you, sir, if she’s to be sold—as, if she is, the gentleman who owns her husband will buy her.”

“ I cannot tell which of the servants will be kept yet, old man. Your mistress will make out a list of those she most wants, and, if possible, they shall be purchased for her; but the creditors must have their money first. I know she means to keep you and your wife; and the carriage and horses will be purchased too, if they do not sell too high.”

Before the barrister had fairly entered the house, Phill ceased his well-intended labours on the carriage and harness.—“ What a fool I have been,” said he to himself, “ to shew off every thing to the best advantage, just to make my poor mistress give more for them—and all to pay money for which my master never got the value of a chew of tobacco! No,

they ought to give her up the carriage, and horses, and driver, if nothing else; and if they don't, I'll try that she shan't pay much for them."

He then threw the harness into a dirty corner of the stable, where the greasy blacking that had just been put upon it caught up the dust and litter, and made it look worse than at first. The carriage was drawn to the river, and in returning, made to pass through the muddiest places he could find. The horses were slightly fed over night, and kept without water, to give them as gaunt an appearance as possible, and the currycomb was used as a modern beau's confusion brush, to produce as much disorder and roughness as possible.

Trueheart found an air of sadness and melancholy in the face of every slave he met. Even the brisk and lively Primus partook of the gloom which he saw reflected in the countenances of all. The worthy advocate dreaded to meet Mrs. Grayson, whose attachment to her ser-

vants, and keen sensibility, were as remarkable as her patience. She had been taking her favourite evening walk to the grave-yard; and about ten minutes afterwards, just as candles were lighted, arrived Mr. Trueheart and his companion. She met him with the same sweet serenity as ever; indeed, he thought there was even more cheerfulness in her manner than he had seen since her husband's death. He then introduced Mr. Stokes, from Georgia.

Mrs. Grayson rather wondered at the appearance of a stranger at such a time; but had no doubt that her friend could give some good reason for it. He however soon put an end to her conjectures, by informing her that Mr. Stokes, hearing of the approaching sale, and wishing to purchase slaves under a good character, had made him an offer, and they had actually been in treaty for the purchase of the greater part of them.

Mrs. Grayson felt very much relieved by this information; for the pain of sep-

rating from the servants, to whom she had been accustomed from her infancy, would be greatly softened, if she could be sure they would be sold to a good master, and all, or nearly all, to the same person.

Mr. Stokes was slightly known by character to Mr. Trueheart, and in the introductory letter he had brought, stating his responsibility for any pecuniary engagement he might make, his qualities as a master were also well spoken of. In the course of the evening, he told Mrs. Grayson, with a communicative frankness not uncommon in his state, that his father had moved from King William county, in Virginia, to the state of Georgia, a little before the breaking out of the revolution, with a few negroes, and a numerous family; that he had taken up a large quantity of land, which had been found particularly adapted to cotton, now becoming a common article of culture in Georgia; that he himself had been very successful as a cotton planter; and from small beginnings, by means of industry

and good management, which his father had learnt on the poor sands of King William, and had practised in a kinder soil and climate, he had made a considerable sum, which he wished to vest in negroes, and thus extend his cotton plantations. He stated, that his father had been once manager for counsellor B——, whose only daughter colonel Grayson had married; and asked if she was the lady.

Mrs. Grayson replied she was. She remembered Mr. Stokes very well—that he often brought her peaches, and that she used to go to his house to eat sweet potatoes with his daughter Polly, of whom she then inquired. He told her that his sister had married very well; she had grown very fat, and was now a widow with nine children. He then detailed many particulars, that he had heard from his father when a child, of the grand style of living of counsellor B——, all of which had made a lively impression on his youthful mind; and from the respect he seemed to feel towards one of his descendants, it

seemed not to have been then entirely effaced.

Mrs. Grayson excused herself for withdrawing at an early hour, that she might have breakfast over the next day, in time to make arrangements for the sale, and to receive the attending crowd; and retired to the small building that has been mentioned before, fitted up for her accommodation during the few days it would be necessary for her to continue at Beachwood.

It was soon whispered by the house servants, who had overheard a part of the conversation, to those in the kitchen, who reported it to those at the Quarter, that there was a gentleman at the "great house," who meant to buy them all, and carry them to Georgia—some said to make cotton, but granny Moll said to make indigo; and to those who had most dreaded a separation from one another, the news afforded matter of congratulation; but to others, to be sent out of Virginia, where they experienced the abundance that prevails on a grain farm, to a country where

provisions not being raised on the plantation were less liberally supplied, appeared more like a punishment than an accommodation, and among these was the old grandain who has been so often mentioned.

In common with the other servants she had arrayed herself in some of her best attire. A clean white cap, bound with a half worn black ribbon, covered her grisly locks; and a wrapper of white homespun, nicely starched and ironed, connected with her wrinkled features and wan complexion, gave her a funereal appearance. She hobbled up to the house, and going to her mistress's chamber, there stood leaning on a stick, and shaking and panting with fatigue from the unusual exertion. Bella was told to hand her a cricket to sit down upon, when she said—"I thought I would come up to see my mistress in her troubles, though the old woman can't lend a hand to any thing now. My Rachel tells me that you are a going to sell the people to a rich man from Georgia, to make indigo. But let me beg and pray my dear mistress

not to sell my Peggy and her children there. They live so hard, as they tell me, in making indigo. I remember my husband went with his young master to the Charleston races, and he told us that the black people worked up to their necks in water—that they have little or no bacon, and now and then a salt herring, and that the overseers are mighty strict. Do pray, my mistress, let that man keep his money, and sell them, as they must be sold (for I'm sure you'd keep them if you could), to your own country people. Let them make corn—let them make wheat—let them make tobacco—though for the matter of that they haven't much rest on a tobacco plantation—but don't send them away where we never shall hear of them. Don't send my Peggy."

Mrs. Grayson had much difficulty in persuading the old woman that her fears were groundless: that in the part of Georgia in which Mr. Stokes lived, they made no indigo, and provisions of all kinds were as plentiful and cheap as in Virginia—

that peaches, water melons, and sweet potatoes, all favourites with the negroes, were better, and more abundant than in Virginia.

The old woman was greatly comforted by this representation of her mistress, in whose accuracy she had implicit confidence; she however still repeated—"But, mistress, let Peggy stay; sell her to somebody that lives in old Virginia."

"Well," said Mrs. Grayson, "it shall be as Peggy pleases."

The fact was, that the old woman had several other children; but as Peggy was the youngest, and had continued longer with her before she took to herself a husband, her heart yearned more strongly to her than the rest, contenting herself that they would be well provided for if they were purchased by the gentleman from Georgia. Mrs. Grayson then asked the old woman if she would choose to remain where she was, or would go to live with her near the Opeccan? as if she would rather continue on the spot to which she

had been accustomed, Mr. Trueheart would stipulate for it in her behalf with the purchaser, as well as for her maintenance.

“ Oh no, my mistress,” said the old woman, “ I must go with you. To be sure I love this cabin ; I have a fine little garden—I have drank water out of the Poplar spring there these thirty years, but I must live and die with my old master’s child,” wiping her eyes. “ They tell me it’s a wild sort of a place upon the ‘Peccan ; but what should I do for my coffee ? and who is to nurse the old woman when she’s sick ? and who’s to bring her wood ? and how should I do without my Louisa ? God bless my child—she looks mighty thin ; when did you hear from her ?”

“ She was tolerably well yesterday, granny. I expect her home to-morrow.”

“ Yes, I must keep with you, my mistress, while I live ; and the old woman won’t trouble you long.”

Her mistress’s susceptible heart was greatly affected at this instance of attachment, though the old woman did not dis-

guise that her own personal comforts had some weight in inducing her choice. Mrs. Grayson then bade Bella go out, and tell all the women to come to her. The order was promptly obeyed, and the sorrowful looks they exhibited contrasted strongly with the neatness, and even gaiety, with which some of them were attired. She informed them of Mr. Trueheart's plan of disposing of them to Mr. Stokes, for the sake of keeping them together—communicated what she had heard of his character as a good master, and advised them to make no objection to the sale; assuring them, that although it would be an advantageous one for the estate, it should not be made if it were against their wishes. She then consulted them one by one; the greater part, on the faith of her recommendation, were willing to live with Mr. Stokes. One said she would rather have remained in the country in which she was raised, and continue at the sort of work she was accustomed to; yet as it might be of advantage to her, who had been a kind

mistress, and had saved her life with her last child, she would rather be sold than not. Three or four, however, persisted in saying that they would rather remain in Virginia, either because they had some expectation of being purchased by particular persons who owned their husbands or sweethearts, or because of the undefined fears which they had of a country they had never seen, and which their mistress's representations were not able to remove.

Having written down the names of those who preferred staying behind, and taking the chance of a good master in Virginia, rather than the certainty of a good one in Georgia, she opened a wardrobe, from which she took a large collection of her old clothes, most of them not past wearing, but no longer suiting the sombre dress she had prescribed to herself the rest of her life, and distributed them among the crowd, rather regarding the size of their families than their several merits in this last act of her bounty. They

received the presents with a courtesy, and a—"Thank you, madam," or—"God bless my dear mistress!" or—"We shall never get such another," or with a simple courtesy and a silent tear, as gratitude, or affection, or that flattery which servitude naturally engenders, happened to prevail. One or two might have been observed, in which there was rather more of discontent that their presents were inferior to those of some of the others, than of gratitude for what they had received. There was, however, not enough of these unamiable characters to affect the beauty of the moral picture of genuine benevolence, active under the severest pressure of misfortune on the one part, and gratitude and affection, taking the place of servile obedience on the other. Caps, handkerchiefs, remnants of muslin, cambric and silk, ribbons, dresses, stockings, curtains, and counterpanes, were borne off in triumph; and the women in their short wrappers and petticoats, without shoes or stockings (except those who belonged to the house), for a while,

forgot that they were soon to change their homes, their habits, their associates, and many of them to be exiled even from their country.

Before this distribution was entirely over, a few persons had arrived, and in a little while the crowd gathered thicker and faster, until the lower rooms of the house, and the yard, were quite filled. The lane, formed by two high fences leading from the road to the house, was lined with horses from one end to the other. Among the company were a few females, drawn there partly by curiosity, and partly by a wish to purchase some article of furniture that had been admired and talked of by their plain neighbours, or mayhap because it had been the property of persons so much beloved and respected.

About twelve the auction began, with selling the kitchen utensils, and the coarse tools and implements of husbandry; from thence they proceeded to the household furniture; and when Mr. Trueheart hap-

pened to bid, a whisper immediately went round—"That is for the widow;" upon which there was a general unwillingness in the company to bid further, though some of the most rigorous creditors, and a very few besides, with some grumbling to conceal their own want of generosity, shewed that they were to be restrained by no considerations of that kind. Their efforts, however, only had the effect of making Mrs. Grayson give a little more for the articles she wished.

Old Hatchett was there, and although he was cautious of bidding for what he did not want, yet he was ready enough to encourage the biddings of others; and he earnestly complained of the injustice of a man's creditors going unpaid, that his family might purchase articles at half-price; articles too that did not suit their present circumstances; remarking—"That people should lay aside their pride when they had lost their property; but that, with some people poverty was no cure for prodigality and waste."

Amidst a good deal of respect and delicacy manifested towards the widow of the deceased colonel Grayson, there were some harsh comments on his inconsiderate facility in being every man's surety, as well as on his ostentatious style of living, and a few coarse jests on the different articles of furniture, many of which excited the wonder and curiosity of the vulgar throng around. They passed from room to room, staring and inquiring into the uses, and cost, and value, of such articles as were new to them, and with irrepressible curiosity, thrust themselves into the bedrooms, where they diligently scanned the minutest particular.

The auctioneer was a man of cleverness and dispatch, and the most valuable articles had been disposed of before three. The little manoeuvres of the bidders were amusing to those disposed to laugh at the foibles of their fellow-creatures, but somewhat mortifying to the sticklers for the dignity of our nature. Pure selfishness

never appears so naked and undisguised as in a great crowd, actuated by some common feeling or motive, for it is not then restrained by the fear of shame (far more potent than conscience); but one in giving indulgence to his feelings is kept in countenance by another. There you might have seen them, pushing forward and elbowing each other, without the usual deference to age or sex, as the stream followed the auctioneer from room to room. Their little artifices in undervaluing the quality of the article with the bystanders, that they might make better bargains—their hostile feelings at the rival bids—their envy at a lucky purchase—the absence of every thing that indicated a benevolent or even a social nature—all seemed to favour the hypothesis of Hobbes, that war is the natural state of man.

“An excellent Wilton carpet, ladies,” cried Mr. Winkornod, the auctioneer, “as good as new.”

“It is burnt in several places,” said one little woman, with sharp peering eyes, and

looking through a pair of spectacles at a small scorch from a cinder.

"This would suit your large room, Mrs. Williams," said the auctioneer.

"Oh, sir, I can't buy Wilton carpets now wheat has fallen."

"Her husband has just sold his crop for two dollars per bushel however," whispered a bystander.

"The Brussels carpets are more fashionable now," said Peggy Buckley.

"This was a very pretty carpet before it was so faded," Mrs. Vaneer said.

Yet when it was set up, this carpet, though burnt and threadbare, and fitted to no room but the one it was in, was bid for very eagerly by all the ladies, and it was finally knocked off by the auctioneer to Mrs. Still, who had been sitting in the corner, and had not said a word.

"A very fine stuffed easy chair, ladies," said the man of the hammer.

"It is rather too narrow," said Mrs. Micklebairn, a short thick woman, who had been sitting in it.

"Is it stuffed with hair or moss?" said another.

"Hair, I presume," said the auctioneer.

"Will you warrant it?" said the other.

"No, madam, but I will inquire."

"It is not worth while, but it feels like moss."

After a long contest, in which Mrs. Micklebairn took a conspicuous part, it was purchased for Mrs. Grayson.

"Every handsome thing is bought in," said one of the ladies colouring.

"Mr. Winkornod, set up this bed and furniture."

"Shall I set up the bed and mattress together?"

"Separate," said one.

"Together," said another.

"I won't bid," said the lady who last spoke, "unless they are set up together."

"I must accommodate the widows," said the polite auctioneer, and the widow accordingly made the purchase.

CHAPTER V.

ABOUT three o'clock notice was given that the residue of the furniture, stock, &c. would be sold on the following day, and they proceeded to make sale of the slaves.

A pine table, about four or five feet square, was brought out of the kitchen, and placed on the lawn before the south door, on which these people were made to ascend, one by one, unless there was a family, in which case they all stood on the ground. One not accustomed to this spectacle is extremely shocked to see beings of the same species with himself set up for sale to the highest bidder, like horses or cattle; and even to those who have been accustomed to it, it is disagreeable, from their sympathy with the humbled and anxious slave. The weight of his fetters, the negro who has been born and

bred on a well-regulated estate, hardly feels. His simple wants are abundantly supplied, and whatever of coercion there is on his will, it is so moderate and reasonable in itself, and, above all, he has been so habituated to it, that it appears to be all right, or rather he does not feel it to be wrong; he is, in fact, a member of a sort of patriarchal family: but when hoisted up to public sale, where every man has a right to purchase him, and he may be the property of one whom he never saw before, or of the worst man in the community, then the delusion vanishes, and he feels the bitterness of his lot, and his utter insignificance as a member of civilized society.

The countenances of the dullest and most phlegmatic of them shewed some emotion when thus exposed—mostly of anxiety about the persons who should purchase them, and sometimes mortification at answering the inquiries made by the bidders, about their health, their age, ability, and willingness to work. Some of

the women who had chosen in the morning to run the risk of being sold to some person in Virginia, when the risk they were about to run was thus brought fully before them, would willingly have recalled their words; and one wept loudly while the auctioneer was, in the way of his trade, crying out—"Three hundred dollars—will nobody give more for this likely wench?"

Her extreme distress induced an inquiry on the part of Mr. Trueheart, and after much sobbing, she admitted that she had just married, or as good as married, a young man, the servant of Mr. McCulloch.

As soon as the old man heard of it, he declared the hussey and his man Jacob must not be separated, though Jacob was an idle chap enough; and he forthwith made a bid, though he knew that the bond he should give would probably get into Hatchett's hands, and that he would be sued on it immediately. But Trueheart,

thinking that his friend would be better off, under his present circumstances, by disposing of a part of his slaves than by purchasing more, suggested another plan of accommodating all parties; this was, to sell both Jacob and Molly to Mr. Stokes, and thus the girl could go with the rest of her family, and the lovers be gratified; and McCulloch be relieved from an old debt, as well as an unprofitable servant, instead of adding to his difficulties; to which arrangement he finally consented, provided Jacob would agree to it.

On one occasion a likely mulatto girl, about eighteen years of age, whose husband was owned in the neighbourhood, was about to be sold; and as slaves of this description often command very high prices, when they happen to suit the tastes of some of the libertines of the French or Spanish settlements, or even as house servants or ladies' maids, they are eagerly sought after by the negro traders. Those who were present readily sought to avail themselves of this object of speculation;

and soon going beyond the limit which the prudent farmer who owned her husband had prescribed to himself, he had stopped, and they continued to bid against one another.

The girl looked extremely alarmed, when she saw she was bid for by men whom she did not know; and one of them, who was very well dressed, and a likely man, having asked her if she would be willing to go with him, she suddenly, and rather petulantly, said—"No!"

The auctioneer, who had directions to dwell a while whenever a slave was about to be sold to a master they did not like, immediately sent for Mr. Trueheart; and he, finding how matters stood, authorized a bystander to make the purchase for him. The trader, piqued at what he called the girl's impudence, which he felt the mean desire of punishing, in order to gratify his humour, and to make some little display of his cash, had bid for the girl forty or fifty dollars more than she was worth; but having time to cool (as the sale now

proceeded slowly), and fearing to make himself a laughingstock with his companions, by the price he should be made to pay, he ceased bidding, and the girl was put down to Mr. Trueheart.

“There is a piece of extravagance for you!” said Hatchett to one standing near him; “here is a woman whose husband died insolvent, or nearly so, and his widow can afford to buy a field girl for four hundred and twenty dollars. I hope they will not talk of compounding after that.”

“The old lawyer has taken a fancy to that mulatto girl; I wonder if he is married?” said one of the negro buyers.

“You had better mind how you talk, young man,” said the farmer, in ill-humour, both with the negro buyer and with himself, “about respectable people in a strange place. That may be the practice where you came from; but the girl would have had a husband of her own colour, if something of that sort had not been running in your head.”

The sturdy appearance and angry looks

of the farmer, and the laugh raised at the expence of the trader, made him check his anger in a few minutes. Trueheart, who was engaged in separating those negroes which were to be sold at auction, from those who were to be retained by Mrs. Grayson, or purchased privately by Mr. Stokes, returned, in a short time, and taking the farmer by the arm—"Hark ye, neighbour Wilkinson," said he, "I will either sell you this boy, or buy his wife. The price is high, to be sure; but I will wait with you a twelvemonth for the money."

The farmer, who had reproached himself for flinching from such a contemptible fellow as he now thought his competitor to be, and who knew that the girl would not be dear at the ordinary difference between cash and credit, consented to the offer; and the pretty mulatto, who was delighted that she was to remain in the county, was still further pleased to find that she would hereafter be with Anthony always, instead of seeing him only once

a week, as had been the indulgence allowed him hitherto.

The next that mounted the table was a tall athletic man, between forty and fifty, by the name of Absalom. He had a look of firmness, and of what some might consider sullenness, and others dejection. The auctioneer looked at his list, and asking his name, read aloud—"Absalom, and his wife Judy.—Where is your wife?"

"She's going to Georgia," said he.

"That must be a mistake," said the other.

Mr. Trueheart was sent for; and Absalom was asked how it happened that he chose to be sold, when his wife had preferred going to Georgia. He made no answer at first; but on the question being repeated, he said that Judy and he had parted. Upon Trueheart's suggesting that they might be reconciled again, he said it was impossible—on which he was sold, and purchased by Mr. Trueheart. It seemed, on further investigation, that he had detected his wife, with whom he had lived.

for about fifteen years, in an infidelity with little Tom, and had repudiated her, though it had cost him a great struggle; and after some interference on the part of their friends; and great contrition on the part of his spouse, and promises of future amendment, they were reconciled, and he was sold to Mr. Stokes.

Although there was no separation of husbands from wives, or mothers from young children, yet, in some instances, those who were going to Georgia were very near relations to many of those who remained behind—the first choosing to separate from their friends rather than encounter uncertain risks.

As Mr. Stokes had an agent there ready to take charge of them, and had already provided the means of transportation, they were required to prepare for starting immediately; while many of those who were purchased by the neighbours, were told to go to their new homes that evening, and that their little articles of furniture and stock could be sent for afterwards. In

such cases they took an affectionate leave of their friends and fellow-servants, with whom they had been born and bred, and from whom they were about to be separated for ever. The solemn shake of their hard hands, and—" Good bye, Dick,"—" God bless you, Sal!"—" Farewell, aunt Nelly,"—" Cousin Charles, God bless you!" were very affecting. Their simple hearts are very susceptible of warm attachment; and many of them on this occasion, especially when they went to take leave of their mistress, as they still called Mrs. Grayson, could not refrain from tears, accompanied by some such benediction as this.—" Heaven bless my kind mistress wherever she goes, and send her good luck!" and " Remember me to Miss Louisa."

Many of those who were going to Georgia made presents to those who stayed behind, especially of such articles as they had not been able to sell. They were all dressed in the coarse white cloth called napped cottons, at once cheap, warm and strong, and thick stout shoes, which had

been made on the estate by some two or three of the number.

Bella came frisking among them, with an air of conscious superiority, crying out, "Mistress says you must all go to the store-room for some sugar, and bring your bottles for molasses."

"God bless my mistress — we never shall get such another!" ejaculated two or three.

"And, Effy, mistress sends you this flannel for Mary Ellen, and says you must be sure to give it the drops every night and morning."

Eight slaves were selected for Mrs. Grayson, four house servants, and four for the field, besides Granny Moll. There were several superannuated, whom Mr. Trueheart concluded to attach to the estate, when it should be sold the next day, as they would be an inconsiderable encumbrance on its value; and it would be far better for them to remain where they had been accustomed to live, than to go off, even for the purpose of being better used.

After the sale of the negroes was over, the carriage and horses were brought up, and Mr. Trueheart, attending for the purpose of bidding for them, would not have recognised them to be the same that he had seen "smartened up," as old Phill termed it, the evening before—so successful had been his pious fraud in metamorphosing their appearance for the worse. He smiled at the device of the old man, which he purposely endeavoured to counteract by expressing his surprise openly at the change. The old servant said afterwards—"Mr. Trueheart be a very great lawyer, and a sensible man, but he no great hand at a bargain. After I had fixed my carriage and horses, so as they look like Joe Holiday's back, he throw all the fat in the fire, by saying—'Phill, what have you been doing to the carriage and horses, they look so rusty?'—'But,' says I, 'ah, massa Trueheart, we are all getting old, carriage, and horses, and driver?'—'But, Phill,' says he, 'you have not got much older since last night.' I wink and

wink; but he do nothing but laugh. He's a mighty green man sometimes; but I told them all the carriage and the horses were a mighty good carriage and horses, except that, like the old man, they were the worse for wear, and they took me at my word; and Mr. Trueheart have them at his own bid, and when I smartened them up, you would not have known them."

The following day, the stock, horses, provisions, and old articles, were disposed of, and then the estate itself was sold. As the land was good, there were two or three bidders besides old Hatchett, who, disappointed in getting it for half-price, let it slip through his fingers, under the persuasion that there were by-bidders employed to make him run up the price, to his infinite mortification when he discovered his mistake.

The succeeding day was one of still greater bustle than the others. The purchasers attending to receive and take away the articles they had bought—calling incessantly on the auctioneer and his clerk—

moving tables and chairs, bedsteads, presses and bureaux—here a parcel of glass, there a case of knives and forks, with a mattock and spade—a kitchen jack, with a set of window curtains, a carpet and a wheat fan. The most heterogeneous mixture was seen in the different lots—some standing in one corner of a room—others moved into the yard, and others again already placed in a cart or waggon to take them away.

Mrs. Grayson, seated in the out-building, was quietly signing receipts, or receiving bonds, or executing such papers as Mr. Trueheart advised, and had already made herself comfortable in her temporary residence, on the same scale as she expected to be in her intended establishment on the Opeccan. The zeal, assiduity, judicious management, and delicate generosity of her worthy friend, had filled her heart with the liveliest gratitude; and she prevailed on him to accept, as a small memento of her grateful friendship, a pair of diamond earrings for Mrs. Trueheart, which had belonged to her mother, and a

London copy of the Encyclopædia Britannica for himself.

Having adjusted every thing with equal dispatch and correctness, this worthy man quitted the house of Mrs. Grayson, leaving both black and white cause to bless him for his well-directed and disinterested benevolence. It was believed, that but for his judicious management, the estate, instead of leaving a handsome surplus, would have fallen far short of paying off Hatchett's claim; and every one rejoiced at the result, as much from their regard to colonel Grayson's widow and family, as their dislike to the hard-hearted usurer.

On the morning after the sale Louisa returned from the Elms; and as much as she was engrossed by her own misfortunes, she could not be insensible to the effects of the change of the circumstances of her family. When she entered the house, the bare floors, and the nakedness of the rooms, had such a forlorn and desolate appearance, that her heart sunk within her. She passed by her mother's

chamber, and though the bedstead was yet standing, it was stripped of its bedding and furniture, and drawn out of its place. What articles remained were scattered in disorder over the middle of the floor, defiled with the marks of the feet, or with the stain which the chewers of tobacco had left on it; brooms, and fireirons, and old trunks, all indiscriminately heaped together. The best articles had been first removed, and there remained old bedsteads, old trunks, boxes, and chests, and other lumber, or such as had been purchased by persons at a distance. She hurried along to where she was told her mother was, and found her sitting with the same serene and resigned countenance as if she was in her easy chair at the window in her own room, reading a sermon, or penning one of her pious effusions to some distant friend.

“Are we not snugly fixed here, my dear?” said she, after an affectionate embrace, and inquiries concerning her daughter’s health. “Mr. Trusheart tells me

but house on the Opera is pretty much like this, except it is of stone; and I think, as it is so small, Rachel and Bella will be able to keep it neater than they did this, without the necessity of scolding."

Louisa was rejoiced to find her mother so satisfied with the change, and she reproached herself more than ever for having concealed any thing from so much goodness. Mrs. Grayson saw, with great concern, amid all the cheerfulness which Louisa assumed, that her health was not improved by her visit. She was thinner and paler. She was persuaded that the anxieties of love preyed on her daughter's too sensitive heart, and a state of painful uncertainty was impairing her health, and undermining even life itself. They laboured to conceal what they suffered, and in amiably endeavouring to lighten the sorrows of the other, each alleviated her own.

The next post brought another letter from Gildon to Louisa, which converted

her doubts and fears into the most cruel certainty. It was in these words:—

“ *New-York, Dec. 15, 1796.*

“ My beloved Louisa's heart, tender and affectionate as it is, will not make known to her what I have suffered since I last wrote. I informed her of my plan of engaging in business in the city of New-York, and this plan had my father's ready approbation and support; he procured me a partner, agreed to become one himself, and to advance two-thirds of the capital. All this went just as I wished; but, as if he suspected my too ready acquiescence, he inserted a clause in the articles of agreement, that neither of the partners should leave the state without the permission of the other two, under the penalty of forfeiting his whole interest, and that the chief management and control of the business was to be in Mr. Van Dyck, a young man whom he has brought up, and in whom he has the

greatest confidence. My first impulse, on reading this provision, was to spurn the proffered advantage; but, would you believe it? the means even of getting from this to Virginia were wanting, he has so limited my pecuniary supplies, and has been so successful in closing the other avenues by which they have heretofore been obtained. What to do under such circumstances I knew not. I then thought, that after our term of partnership expired, I might, from the profits which my father would have no right to control, be able to gratify the first wish of my heart, and make my Louisa mine by the rights of law, as I trust she already is in affection. But on further reflection, I felt it would be an act of gross injustice to the most lovely and most amiable of her sex, and a most ungrateful return for her kindness towards me, to keep her so long in a state of suspense, and subject to the anxieties that ever attend it, as well as to the remarks and sneers of the illiberal—she;

whose beauty, and manners, and accomplishments, have resounded through the Valley of Shenandoah, and at whose feet the worthiest and most accomplished youth of the land would be proud to throw themselves, if permitted—I could not, my most lovely, my never-to-be forgotten Louisa, be thus unreasonable. Love such as mine seeks the real interests of its object still more than its own gratification. I feel myself called upon, by every principle of justice, generosity, and honour, to release you from your engagement, rather than expose you to the perils and disadvantages of a three years' separation. My own heart I know could never change. I fear thy too pleasing image is destined ever to reign there triumphant, and to unfit me for any other business or pursuit. But is it not among the things impossible too, that in this long interval, besieged as you would certainly be by wealth and talents, and the entreaties of friends, these cruel intermeddlers with the happiness of lovers, you you might forget your Gildon? If so,

ought I not to enable you to do it without blame, as it is not in my power to place you in that situation from which I should take you, and which you are so eminently qualified to adorn? I shall anxiously await your answer. Be assured that it has cost me pangs not to be described to take this course; but in my cruel situation I had no other alternative. It was a choice of evils, and in making the selection, I have regarded your interest, not my own inclinations; for believe me when I swear to you, that the happiest moments of my life have been in your sweet and innocent society, and that the world has nothing for me that can compare with that bliss, if circumstances would permit me to enjoy it. Farewell, my amiable, my ever-loved Louisa. I shall always be your devoted, though unfortunate,

“GILDON.”

CHAPTER VI.
~~~~~

THE unhappy Louisa had not half read this evidence of her lover's perfidy before her eyes became dizzy and her brain confused. She endeavoured to get up and retire, but in the effort at concealment, she swooned away, holding the letter in her hand. Her affectionate mother ran to her assistance, and taking possession of the fatal paper, and putting it in her pocket, she endeavoured to give such aid as her situation required. In a few minutes she came to herself, but it was only to utter the most piteous and heart-rending cries of distress.

"Where is it?" said she looking around her.

Mrs. Grayson told her, if she meant the letter, it was safe in her pocket, and had not been seen by any one.



“ Read it then, my dear mother, read it, and judge what I must feel. Oh, could he be so cruel? Stay, it may not be his handwriting—it may be a forgery.”

“ It has the New-York post-mark,” said Mrs. Grayson.

“ Let me see. It may be some contrivance of that odious Miss De Peyster.”

She took the letter, and saw too plainly that it was Gildon's hand. She now finished reading it, and the high-wrought compliments it contained looked so much like insults, that they brought a momentary indignation to her aid; but this feeble support soon deserted her, and resentment gave way to pure, unmingled grief, and the blackest despair.

Mrs. Grayson ran over the letter hastily, and saw enough to satisfy her, that it was the pitiful shift of a mean, mercenary lover, who was abandoning the object of his affection because she was poor; and began to call to her aid the precepts of religion, the vanity of all worldly hopes and expectations, and that “ there is no-

thing true but Heaven." With the calm dignity that was natural to her, and had been strengthened by misfortune, she said—“ My child, this man has proved himself unworthy of you ; and self-respect requires you to despise the wretch who could thus sport with your feelings.”

Louisa seemed all the while following the course of her own thoughts ; but catching at the last words—“ Yes, sport with my feelings,” she repeated.—“ Oh, Gildon, could you read the heart you are thus lacerating, you could not have written that letter ! And has it come to this ? Have then all my fond dreams of happiness vanished for ever ? Is this the result of your professions and vows of never-ending love ?— Oh, mamma, pity me, pity me !”

“ Comfort yourself, my child, and trust yourself to our heavenly Father.”

“ I deserve not the favour of Heaven— I deserve not your pity— I merit no scorn. Oh, mother, mother, let me hide myself from the face of the world ! I am

unworthy of you—I have deceived you—I saw him at Stanley—he followed me there without my knowledge.”

“ Oh, my child, how could you conceal the fact from me? Have I deserved this want of confidence?”

“ I have been a culpable wretch. I see it—I know it. Oh, forgive me!”

“ My child,” said her mother, unable to reproach her when she was so self-accusing and so afflicted, “ I do forgive you, and I regret it more upon your account.”

“ My dear mother,” said Louisa, interrupting her, “ you will not, you cannot forgive me. I have not told you all. I saw him privately—I saw him too often—I—oh, I am the veriest wretch that lives!”

Her mother guessed too plainly at what her daughter intimated; and she thought now that the cup of her afflictions was full. One painful thought followed another in rapid succession. The forlorn and unprotected condition of her child—her blasted affections—the stain on the

hitherto unblemished honour of her house; so tortured her, that it required all her natural fortitude, and all her habitual resignation to the will of Heaven to support her.—“And have we nursed a viper in our bosoms to sting us to death?” said she, in a tone that was rare with her. “And have you so far forgot what was due to yourself—to your family—your father’s honour?” here she could not refrain from weeping.

“He is not altogether to blame,” said the generous girl; “I have been as much in fault as he. But he never could have loved me; I see it now too plainly; and death will soon come to relieve me from a hateful existence.”

“Is that the way you insult an offended Providence, Louisa? Instead of seeking to atone for your errors, by penitence and amendment, to wish to rush unasked into the presence of your Creator! Are you prepared for the change?”

“Forgive me, my dear, my angelic mother! I know not what I say. De-

spirit deprives me of my reason; but I cannot, I am sure I cannot survive it!"

The wild and frantic looks of Louisa now awakened all the tenderness of the mother, and for a time suspended her indignation towards Gildon, and the deep mortification she felt for the degradation of her family. She used some soothing expressions; but these seemed to throw the wretched girl into more violent paroxysms of grief, her mother's gentleness and tenderness but enhancing the pain of self-reproach.

"Do not pity me, my dear mother—I deserve nothing but scorn and reproaches: do not pity me, or you will drive me to madness!"

After this burst of passionate grief had subsided, her pale and haggard face shewed the exhausted state of her system, and that she had need of repose. Mrs. Grayson sent for Isabel, her favourite maid, and requested her to attend to her daughter, whom she then advised to seek some

rest, and withdrew to her room to meditate on this unlooked-for calamity, and to brace her mind up to endure and to bow to the will of Him, who striketh where he listeth, and who often chasteneth by affliction those whom he loveth.

She began now to fear a new danger, and that Edward's fiery temper would, on receiving the intelligence, resort to some violent steps; and incensed as she felt, in spite of all her Christian forbearance, against the author of her calamity, she determined that her son ought not to be made immediately acquainted with Gildon's desertion.

After Louisa was put to bed, she was found to have a burning fever. Her tears, with some intermissions, continued to flow; and she uttered short ejaculations at intervals, which shewed the steady current of her thoughts.—“Cruel man!—“Impossible! he must have loved me!”—“What shall I do?”—“What! oh, my mother, my mother!”

Mrs. Grayson sat awhile, till she ap-

peared to be more composed; and exhorting her to address herself to the Throne of Mercy, she approached her bed, and kissing her as usual, wished her a good-night. Poor Louisa, overcome by her mother's unabated affection, could make no reply, her sobs stifling the few words of love and gratitude she would have uttered.

The next morning Louisa was so ill that Mrs. Grayson proposed to send for a physician; but she objected, and asked for Matilda. A pressing note was accordingly written for her to come over to see Louisa, who was in bed. Mrs. Fawcner inquired as minutely as she could of the messenger into the nature of the fever, and insisted on her daughter fortifying herself with a small bag of camphor around her neck, lest it should be infectious, as some cases this autumn had been regarded. Matilda lost no time in setting out, and reached Beachwood before twelve o'clock. The meeting was a very affecting one. Matilda did not hint at her former predictions, and

Louisa admitted her own blindness and folly. Sometimes she railed at the perfidy and cruelty of her lover; but if any remark of the same character was uttered by her friend, she always threw in something by way of extenuation, that shewed it was painful to her to hear him censured by another, and that the love which he had planted in her heart was too deep rooted to be torn away at once. Louisa insisted on having the letter brought to her; and after reading it, and pondering on it awhile, she asked Matilda, if "he did not appear to feel a good deal at the step he was taking?" But Matilda's looks implying mistrust—"Fool that I am," said she, "I have taken no pains to secure his love. I have done all I could to change it to contempt."

Matilda dwelt on every topic which affectionate friendship could suggest, to alleviate her sorrows; and so far as her wounded spirit could receive comfort, it was soothed by the efforts of her sympathizing companion, with whom she felt



nothing of the bitterness of self-reproach which her mother's presence occasioned.

One morning, soon after the receipt of the fatal letter, Louisa seemed in better spirits than usual, and looked very much refreshed by her night's sleep. She had experienced, during her slumbers, one of those visions which cheat us for a time of our misery, more completely perhaps than any of the realities of life; and on this occasion it was not followed by the pain of finding it was but a dream, for it had cheered her desolate heart with a ray of hope. She dreamt that she was walking in Matilda's garden, about the middle of winter, when every plant was killed by the frost, or drooping and leafless, and that she had here complained to Matilda that she feared her lover would never return. On which her friend had advised her to write. That she had accordingly written him a letter, in which she poured out her whole heart, and many passages of which were still fresh in her recollection. That, overleaping time and distance in her dream,

she thought the letter had reached him; on which he had immediately returned; and that they were about to be married in the summerhouse; on which the whole scene was immediately changed: every shrub in the little garden was in full bloom, and every flower shedding delightful fragrance. In the suddenness of the transition from wretchedness to bliss, her feelings were so strong that she awoke.

This creation of her fancy, on the subject which occupied all her waking thoughts, so haunted her imagination the next morning, that she communicated it to Matilda, and insisted on writing to Gildon. The good sense of Matilda in vain attempted to dissuade her from a step, which would but delude her with false hopes, and was inconsistent with the respect due to herself. She was inflexible in her purpose; and Matilda consented to furnish her with materials for writing, provided she would consent to her disclosing it to Mrs. Grayson. She agreed that her mother might be informed of it, after the letter was sent

off, but on no account before, lest she should be opposed to a scheme from which her own fond hopes augured so favourably. Accordingly, while her mother, worn down by the watching of the preceding night, was sleeping the next morning, she sat up in the bed, and in the following letter poured forth the feelings of her heart to her faithless lover:—

“ *Beachwood, Dec. 1796.*

“ In spite of appearances, I am sure, oh Gildon! you were not aware of the effect your cruel letter was to have, at the time that you wrote it. I cannot yet believe that your heart is changed. I, who know what it is to love, and how impossible it is to eradicate the passion, when it is truly felt, but with death, cannot believe that you are already indifferent to your Louisa. I can truly say, from the period of our last interview, I have not seen one happy moment before last night, in a dream, when about to join our fates

at the altar, I was raised from the lowest abyss of misery to the summit of human bliss; and it is the hope inspired by this blest vision which induces me now to address you. They say dreams sometimes come from heaven, and are the harbingers of truth; God grant that such may be the character of mine! It is in your power, Gildon, to realize the blessed vision; and can it be possible that you will not do it? I have a full persuasion that I was not indifferent to you: you told me so—you swore it—your looks, your actions, all proclaimed it as plainly as your words; and it was not extraordinary that you should have been gratified at as warm, as tender, as true a devotion, as was ever felt by woman's heart. You could not have feigned the passion you professed—it was impossible; I could not have been deceived; love such as mine is too jealous and sharp-sighted for that; nothing but sincere attachment on your part could have inspired love such as mine. If then you were sincere, what has happened to lessen

your regard? Am I not the same? have I altered in person, mind, or heart? It is true, the fever which the fear of your desertion has occasioned, has reduced me to the brink of the grave; but your presence, your smiles, the assurances of your affection, would act on me like rain on a withered flower. Oh, Gildon! the very hope which my dream has inspired has already renovated my strength, calmed my troubled spirit, and brought colour to my faded cheek. Is my heart altered? Yes, it is changed; for that which was once a cold and regulated sentiment, is now a passion that consumes me. Not a moment passes in which your image is not present—sometimes appearing to my entranced imagination with those sweet smiles and fascinating looks that won my virgin affections; but often of late—oh God! what a difference!—with a stern, unrelenting visage, and averted looks.—And what have I done, Gildon, that you should turn away from me? Is it to have loved you as women never loved before?—is it to have

forgotten the dictates of prudence, the advice of friends, the commands of the best and most affectionate of parents, to please you, that you thus turn from me?—is it that I have done more—have disregarded all the precepts of education, of morality and religion, that you have forgotten me?—Oh, Heavenly Father! and can there be a heart that would first use its unlimited power to lead a defenceless victim astray, and then urge that very error as a cause of desertion? And can then that being be my Gildon—once the pride as well as the joy of my heart? It cannot be. The Gildon whom I knew in these shades, conversed with in that porch, and walked with on yonder beach, was as remarkable for his generosity as his tenderness. If the act is ignoble, it cannot be his. Ah! what were my remonstrances! what were my exhortations!—what did I not say to you on my knees, when you, hurried on by the impulses of passion, sought to abuse the power you possessed over me? And what were your arguments? what your

promises? what your protestations? Have these arguments lost their force?—are these protestations forgotten—these promises annulled? It cannot be. After that fatal evening, your love seemed to have acquired a new tenderness, and more lively ardour. What then is it which can have made such a change? But whatever it is, let me recall you to the path of truth, and honour, and justice—of pity and humanity. Oh, Gildon! if your breast can be steeled against my sufferings, have mercy on—must I tell you?—but why not? We are———. My mother does not know it, nor have I the courage to tell her. You and Matilda are the only beings on earth to whom I could mention it; all others shall know it only by my death. Speak then a word of comfort, to restore me to peace and happiness—make me what I was when here you found me, innocent and gay. Do all this, as you may in one word, by telling me, and shewing me, that you still love your own devoted Louisa. Oh, Gildon! could you see me, propped

up with pillows, wan and emaciated, and supported only by the hope which my own heated fancy has created; could you see the wreck and desolation which you have caused in a once happy family—a family lately the object of your esteem and regard; could you see my broken-hearted mother, watching half the night over the feeble frame of her still more wretched daughter—it is not in your heart, it is not in the breast of the veriest monster in the human form, to turn a deaf ear to my supplications—no, it is impossible. You will not stab to the heart her whose only crime has been her too great love of you, and —————. You cannot have so forgotten the love that you lately felt; and if you have lost the ardour of a lover, you cannot have laid aside the feelings of a man. Forgive me, Gildon, if I have said any thing harsh or displeasing. I would suffer any cruelty that can be inflicted, rather than willingly give you a moment's pain; for, with all that you have made me suffer, you are, beyond all ex-



pression or conception, dear, oh! too dear  
to your own

“ L———.”

When Louisa first began to write, she derived so much strength from the excitement of her feelings, that she was not sensible of fatigue, and the same cause supported her to the end. But the moment she had finished, her strength, put to so severe a trial, deserted her all at once, and she fell back senseless on her pillow.

Matilda, who was reading at the fire, heard a noise in the bed, and looking round, saw the face of her friend exhibiting the paleness of death, with her eyes closed. She first ran to Louisa, and then called for assistance. Bella, who was at hand, came running in, and seeing the situation of her mistress, screamed out that she was dead. This alarmed the rest of the servants, and the bustle awaked Mrs. Grayson, who had been sleeping about an hour. She hastened in, and finding her

daughter in a fainting fit, and at the same time seeing the writing implements on the bed, which Matilda had not had time, nor even the thought of removing, she asked if Louisa had been writing? On being answered in the affirmative, she said to Matilda, in a tone of reproof she had never used towards her before—"I wonder, my child, you could be so imprudent as to suffer it."

"I see, madam, how wrong it was," said Matilda; "but I have not time to explain what led to it."

Mrs. Grayson took the letter, and saw it was to the man whose name she had of late held in utter abhorrence. She was too anxious about the situation of her child then to read it, but she folded it up and put it in her pocket. When Louisa came to herself, she looked around with an inquisitive, anxious eye; but Matilda, who understood her, told her to compose herself, and not to talk in her present weak state.

Mrs. Grayson after a while retired to

her room, read over the letter, and found her dreadful apprehensions but too truly confirmed; but her daughter gave such a touching picture of her sufferings, and seemed so overwhelmed with remorse and shame, and the pangs of blasted affection, that she felt more of maternal pity for her woes, than of blame for her errors.

“Wretched child!” said she, “how light are all my misfortunes, grievous as they certainly are, compared with thine! I thought too that I had reached the last point of human wo, and yet this is the moment of the most unmixed bitterness I ever yet experienced. While we act up to our duty—while we conform to the great law of Him who made us, we never can be completely wretched—we always have some sources of consolation. But whither, oh! whither can this unhappy girl now turn for comfort? Such is the hopelessness of her situation, she cannot even impart her feelings and sentiments to me—to me, from whom she never had a secret before!—Father of Mercies! help thine

unworthy servant in this hour of affliction; and if it is not according to thy divine will to afford relief to her sufferings, at least enable her to bear them."

Thus fortified by the aid of religious meditation and prayer, she returned to her daughter's room, and taking her hand, mildly said—"My dear Louisa, I know every thing—I pity you still more than I blame you."

"Oh, mother!" said Louisa, sobbing, "can you then forgive me?"

"Compose yourself," said her mother; "pray to the Giver of all good for forgiveness, and ask him for aid in this hour of trial; there alone is to be found a balm for the wounded spirit. Kneel, my daughter, and pray, or let a mother's prayers be offered up, and do you join your humble supplications to the Throne of Mercy."

She then, inspired by the high-wrought state of her feelings, poured forth a prayer of the most touching eloquence, by which her daughter, though melted, was soothed. Louisa called her mother to her bedside,

and asked permission to kiss her, saying to her, if ever there was an angel upon earth, she was one, and that she was too forgiving, too good.

“My child,” said Mrs. Grayson, as the tears, in spite of her habitual composure and self-command, coursed one another down her pallid cheeks, “I feel for you the warmest affection, and I know you reciprocate it.”

“I ever have indeed, my mother; and oh that my heart had never known any other!”

Matilda had been a silent spectator of this affecting scene, but her tears flowed in unison with those of the mother and daughter. Mrs. Grayson told Louisa that her advice was, that the letter she had written should not be sent, or at all events not by the post, as it would aggravate their sufferings if it should miscarry, or fall into strange hands. Such a contingency had never occurred to Louisa, and she agreed to wait for a more cer-

tain mode of conveyance; and that in this, as in every thing else, she would be governed by that advice which she had been so severely punished for disregarding.

Mrs. Grayson, seeing her daughter was more composed, retired to her room; and no longer feeling the necessity for the exertion she had used there to conceal her emotions, she lamented the fate of her lost and disgraced child in a burst of unrestrained grief. Nor could she think of any plan by which the stain upon the hitherto unsullied honour of their house could be kept from the knowledge of the world, or that any thing like happiness or respectability could again attend her in life. She dreaded also the consequences with Edward, whose proud and lofty spirit would never suffer the author of such a disgrace to escape with impunity.

After Louisa's bosom had been disburthened of the painful secret which oppressed it, her mind became greatly relieved; and she found a consolation in the religious exercises of her mother that she

had before been a stranger to, while there was any thing concealed. Nor was she without some hope, that the aberration of her lover was a temporary one, and that he would yet return to that faith in which she could not be persuaded he was not once sincere. She resolved, should it be otherwise, to give herself up wholly to religious duties, and the society of her mother, abandoning the world and its vain pleasures, to which she was persuaded her heart would then be for ever dead.

In this consolatory frame of mind her health gradually returned; so far as to enable her to set out for the Opecon—though the glow which brightened her emaciated and delicate cheek gave fearful indications that the seat of her disease was permanently fixed.

Matilda returned to the Elms the day before they were to set out for the Opecon, promising to visit them as soon as they were settled in their new habitation, and to spend with them the greater part

of the winter; her mother's opposition to Edward having subsided into a silent discontent, seeing that all her schemes had been frustrated, and no offer that she deemed more eligible had been made.

The following day Mr. Trueheart, who had been sent for, as he had requested, came down about ten o'clock, and they set out from that seat where Mrs. Grayson had passed the happiest and the bitterest hours of her life. It was a cold but clear and cloudless December day, when the brightness of the blue sky contrasted strongly with the desolate aspect of the country around, and when all the trees were leafless, except a few scattering pines, whose lugubrious foliage was still more in unison with the cheerless season than the bare trunks and branches of the other tenants of the forest. It was a melancholy day to a woman of her amiable and tender feelings. The house, the grounds, the trees, the distant mountain, and the glassy surface of the river, beautiful as they were in themselves, were rendered interesting



chiefly by the melancholy recollections with which they were associated. In this spot she had witnessed years of an uninterrupted connubial bliss as it can fall to the lot of mortals to know. Here she had reared the most lovely and promising children—here she had been severed by death from that husband she had idolized, and had bid a lasting adieu to the vulgar pleasures of life—here the remains of that husband were deposited. All these circumstances made the spot inexpressibly dear to her heart; for the very melancholy they inspired constituted its mysterious charms. But the sufferings she had of late experienced here were of so painful a character, that they served to weaken the force of local attraction; and she was glad, on Louisa's account, to remove from a spot where every thing she saw must revive feelings of shame, regret, and remorse. A part of their small household had been sent on the preceding day to make suitable preparations for receiving them; and a part set out a little before them that

morning in a waggon, driven, as it happened, by the identical waggoner with whom Gildon had had the fracas, and who would have exulted in the verification of his prophecy, that "he would come to no good," could he have known all that was known to his employers.

Louisa was carefully wrapped up in wool-  
len and fur, yet the shock was evidently too  
great for her tender lungs, as her frequent  
coughing indicated. They reached "The  
Retreat" about two o'clock, having travel-  
led a distance of fourteen miles from Beach-  
wood. They found the house to consist of  
two small rooms below, with a passage be-  
tween them, and two rooms in the garret.  
It stood on a piece of flat ground, to the  
south of a range of hills, which were cov-  
ered with wood, and defended the man-  
sion from the north and north-west winds.  
The Opeccan ran obliquely before the  
house, and made to the right a small piece  
of rich bottom, while to the left a ridge  
of land covered with pines was the be-  
ginning of an extensive forest, which was

the asylum of numerous deer, foxes, and other wild animals, for the sport of the huntsman, and the annoyance of the poultry-yard. The land was hilly to the south, on the other side of the Opeocan, and covered with woods and fields intermixed; it being a body of hilly fertile land, which was pretty thickly settled; and the houses and settlements, built mostly of the blue limestone, but occasionally of wood, gave cheerfulness to the scene. The furniture was already disposed in its proper place, the house put in neat order, and the floors well rubbed, where it was not carpeted. One room served them for eating and sitting. The other room below was the chamber of the mother and daughter; and a little closet, built out beside the massy stone chimney, was used as a dressing-room. Such convenient outhouses as were not there before had been put up by the provident care of Mr. Trueheart, in the simple style that suited the rest of the establishment. A comfortable dinner had been provided, and Mrs. Grayson felt more as

if she was visiting a neighbour, than that she had made a change of residence. The place was more improved than she had expected, and she found there every thing that was essential to comfort. She was particularly pleased with a spring-house to the left of the dwelling-house, which was placed a little below a rock, from which gushed out a bold and perennial spring of the purest water, which, passing over the floor and one side of the spring-house, immediately assumed the character of a respectable stream, and was, about half a mile below, sufficient to turn a small mill, whose ever-revolving wheel gave animation and picturesque beauty to the quiet scene.

“ Here,” thought Mrs. Grayson, “ shut out from the more busy and ostentatious portion of the world, I can prepare my mind for that state to which we all are fast tending. Here I shall have ample time to pour out my adorations to my heavenly Father, and invoke his mercy and forgiveness for me and mine, Yonder

settlements will furnish me with sufficient opportunities, as far as my humble means extend, of being useful to my fellow-creatures.—Oh God! even in this day of tribulation and grief, I yet have cause to return thee thanks for thy goodness and mercy.”

Mr. Trueheart described to her the limits of the farm, as well as the course of husbandry he had been pursuing; and then added—“But, I had like to have forgotten to tell you that I had written to Edward to-day, and urged him to return to Williamsburg without delay, or perhaps he had better come up to Frederick at once, and continue his studies in my office. There are two very promising young men now with me, who will afford him both society and exercise in argument, and I want him to get a licence in the course of the next year. I have a project of giving him a good start, by the collection of the debts due to a house in Alexandria, that is winding up its extensive concerns, and

which suits a young man just entering into practice better than it does me."

"I too have written," said Mrs. Grayson, "as has another person, whose letter may have more effect than both of ours."

"Ay, I think the wind begins to set fair in that quarter. The old lady inquired the other day how many students I had? whether I expected any more? the prospects for a young lawyer at present? by which I saw, as plainly as if she had told me, and something plainer too, that her views and temper are changed. A bright evening yet awaits you, my dear madam, after all your stormy trials."

"My trust is in Heaven, Mr. Trueheart. If my children could be happy and respected, 'tis all I now seek," said she; but the recollection of her unhappy daughter checked her speech, and she was not able to stifle a deep, long-drawn sigh. The worthy man saw the rising emotion, and hastened his departure, amidst the grateful benedictions of those he had befriended.

CHAPTER VII.  
~~~~~

A LITTLE before those scenes of woe which we have detailed had occurred at Beachwood, Edward had gone to Easton to superintend the sale of that estate. The distress among the slaves at parting from one another, and of being separated from scenes endeared to them by early pleasures, and by habit, were pretty much as have been described in Frederick, except that the gentleman who had purchased the Easton estate bought also the greater part of the slaves. And Mr. Cutchins, the manager, as he was not able to purchase the little corner he wanted, it being thought by good judges to be the most valuable part of the tract, and before the present year had produced excellent crops, had, as one of the creditors of the estate, bid very freely for the slaves and stock,

and some of the best of the furniture. Nor did the field negroes shew as much regret on being sold as those of Beachwood, inasmuch as they for a long time had less intercourse with the family, and were under the management of a steward, who had treated them with less kindness and indulgence than the others had received from Mrs. Grayson.

Having executed the no very agreeable office of selling the land of his forefathers, the scenes of his infant sports and joys, for the purpose of paying the debt of another, he returned as soon as it was over to Williamsburg; and sending off old Lemon to the post-office, he soon returned with a letter from Matilda.

In this letter she had stated, as she felt herself bound to do, her fears of Gildon's constancy, which the postponement of his return had occasioned; and though she did not venture to acquaint Edward with the extent of his sister's imprudence, she informed him of her lover's visit, and their frequent interviews at Stanley.

The unaccountable silence of Gildon had given Edward increasing uneasiness; and when he learnt that he had postponed his visit to Virginia till the spring, he was persuaded that it could have proceeded only from a change in his feelings towards Louisa. He intended therefore to write to her, to rouse her pride, and to remonstrate with her against longer feeling an attachment for one so undeserving of her. He intended also to write to Gildon, demanding an explicit declaration of his views. In the picture which Matilda gave him of his sister's anxiety, he felt nothing but pity for her, and indignation at the unworthy cause, and for a time forgot his own sorrows and difficulties. He went to bed greatly fatigued with his ride, and the uneasiness which the intelligence he had received had excited kept him awake the best part of the night.

The next morning he did not rise till after he was summoned to breakfast. He went to the ordinary, and soon perceiving that he was viewed with eyes of curiosity

by several of the students, he was induced to ask one who was more in his confidence than the rest what was the cause of it. On which he learnt that Mawly had declared at table that he had just received a letter from Gildon, in which he had said the match with Miss Grayson was entirely broken off, and that he had spoken of her in terms of levity, which had incensed some of the students, though Mawly had undertaken to defend him. Edward immediately said—"I will know the truth of this, and either Mawly or Gildon shall answer the consequences."

Mawly, who though of a vindictive character, and well enough disposed to make mischief, was not over willing to support it by his courage, had no hesitation in shewing Gildon's letter, in which he spoke of his late engagement with Louisa, of the necessity he found himself under to break it off, and of his address in doing so, with great levity and want of feeling. He even extolled the beauty and personal attractions of Louisa, as if he was speaking of a

cast-off mistress, rather than of a delicate female, who had honoured him with her affection.

"It is enough, sir," said Edward proudly; "I see that your friend has been capable of writing what may bear you out in your statements, though I give you no credit for propagating it. I wish you a good-morning."

His course was now taken. He paid off his bills that evening; took the stage the next morning for Richmond, where he stopped only long enough to get as much money from his agent as would defray his expenses, and proceeded on without loss of time as far as Philadelphia. When he arrived in that city, he wished to pass a day or two with some students of medicine from Virginia, for the purpose of procuring intelligence of the movements of Gildon, and of recruiting somewhat from the fatigues of his journey. The session of Congress too had just commenced, and he was desirous of being present at a debate.

He learnt (through his Virginia friends) of some students from New-York, that Gildon had renewed his addresses to Miss De Peyster, and was expected to marry her by some, though others thought he was merely playing the agreeable with her, as it was said he had been doing with a young lady of family in Virginia.

On hearing this intelligence, Grayson's indignation boiled within him. He resolved that he would make an example of such a wretch, who had profited by the hospitality that had been extended to him, to blast the happiness of his entertainers. He began to review his whole conduct, and while some parts of it seemed to favour a system of duplicity and perfidy, he was obliged to admit that its general character seemed to indicate it could have proceeded only from unfeigned attachment to his sister, and real friendship for her family. He was lost in perplexity to reconcile these seeming incongruities; but the fact is, he did not make sufficient allowances for the variable character of Gildon,

who, very different at different times, was according to the prevailing humour, either the impassioned lover, willing to sacrifice "all for love," or the cold-hearted calculating man of the world, making the higher duties of honour and justice bend to the dictates of an ignoble ambition.

Though in a frame of mind which ill prepared him for viewing what was most worth seeing in Philadelphia; yet he suffered himself to be conducted about the city by his young friends; and concealing his thoughts and purposes from all but one friend, Charles Campbell, of Jefferson county, he was able to bear a part in the frolic and youthful jollity which prevails among the southern students at that medical institution when a countryman comes among them.

He visited the almshouse, gaol, hospital, and state-house. None of these afforded him so much pleasure as the gaol, or penitentiary-house, then making the noble experiment (first suggested by speculative philanthropy) of endeavouring to reform

the criminal, instead of taking away his life, and of graduating punishments to crimes. The neatness and regularity with which every thing was managed—the mildness with which counsel was given and punishment was enforced, seemed more in the character of parents superintending their children, than officers of justice executing the sentence of the law. He was struck with the silence of the prisoners, even at their meals, for he saw them at dinner, and with their grave and serious deportment indicating, in general, sorrow and dejection, rather than sullenness or despair. He asked the keeper, a sensible obliging man, animated with the zeal of the Society of Friends, of which he was a member, how they proceeded when they met with persons who would neither work nor submit to these regulations. He said they were condemned to close confinement in small dark cells, where the privation of light, and their unpalatable diet (they being then restricted to bread and water), and of all communion with

their fellow-prisoners, being shut out from every cheering sound, particularly of that of the human voice, soon humbled them, and made them submit to the commands of their superintendents.

Grayson asked him if he did not sometimes meet with refractory tempers, who would not yield even to this severe discipline. He said never, except in one instance they had a negro who would not work; and when of course condemned to solitary confinement, he soon fell asleep, and waking when they brought him his allowance of bread and water, would take them, and go to sleep again; and he seemed to prefer thus dozing away an inert existence, to a state of comparative enjoyment, encumbered with the necessity of labour.

Grayson then asked if there was any striking difference in the number of prisoners furnished by the different nations. The superintendent said there was more than a just proportion of Irish, and an unusually small proportion of Scotch, which

he imputed to the benignant influence of their public schools. As to the portion furnished by the different states, he said there was no uniformity.

Grayson went away filled with admiration for this triumph of philosophy and benevolence over vindictive feelings, and resolved that he would exert himself, if circumstances should ever put it in his power, to introduce the same wise and benevolent system into his own state.

In Congress-hall he was highly gratified to behold the leading statesmen of his country; though in that early period of the session, the business was but of little moment. He applied to the representative from his district, by whom he was well known, to give him an introduction to the illustrious Washington, the president of the United States, whose approaching retirement from public affairs had softened the virulence of his opponents, and was viewed with alarm and anxiety by the rest of the nation. He then had regular levees, or mornings for receiving company,

at which the heads of departments and foreign ministers attended, together with such citizens as were known, or were introduced by some officer of the government. He lived at that time in the upper part of Market-street. When Edward and his friend entered, they found a great many already assembled, in a large oval room; in which the company were standing around; while the president, in a suit of black velvet, with his hair powdered white, and tied behind with a silk bag, was in the middle of the circle, conversing easily and readily with those about him. He found something to say to every one, and habit had enabled him to be always provided with easy, pertinent questions, without labour or premeditation.

As soon as Edward was presented—
 “You are a son of the late colonel Grayson I presume—I see it by the likeness, I hope Mrs. Grayson enjoys her health,” said he, with more of feeling than his manner commonly indicated. Then turning to the member, Mr. S——, he observed—“The

late colonel Grayson commanded a company at the battle of Princeton, and was very near poor Mercer when he fell." This was all that fell to Edward's share, as he had to give place to two or three elderly gentlemen who were then present.

It was not the fashion to stay long, as there was a constant succession of persons going and coming during the whole time Edward was there, so that the room was constantly full, and yet seemed never, for five minutes together, to consist of the same individuals. He thought he could never be tired of looking at this, the most distinguished man of his age and nation. He watched every turn and movement he made, caught every word that fell from his lips, and thought he had never seen so much grace and dignity united. He was so delighted, and so engrossed, that he was surprised when his friend, jogging him by the elbow, told him it was time to withdraw.

After he retired, he went to the boarding-house where his friend Campbell lived,

and there some of the students insisted on carrying him to the museum and the library, and to the large marble house then building in Eighth-street, and deemed, by its magnitude and costliness, more an architectural curiosity than any other edifice in the city.

He passed a social evening with six or eight Virginians, who went to sup at the Indian Queen, in South Second-street; but while he exhibited the outward signs of youthful gaiety, his thoughts were running on the melancholy reverses of his family.

He went to bed about eleven, and a little before day was roused by a waiter holding a candle, with—"Sir, the stage is ready," and the moment afterwards heard the blast of the horn that sounds so ungrateful unto the drowsy traveller on a winter's morning: but Edward had been an alert fox-hunter; and though the air was something sharper than he had been accustomed to in Williamsburg, he was up and dressed in a few minutes, and in a

few more had paid off his bill, and was seated in the stage beside a fat land speculator, who having supplied the Philadelphians with rich western lands, was now going to accommodate those who were in New-York.

When day at length dawned, he found there were five persons in the stage besides the driver—a young lady, and a middle aged man beside him, who proved to be a great mechanical genius from Connecticut, who had come on to get a patent for a brick-making machine; he was also a zealous democrat, and very gallant to the lady, whose escort he offered to be. The others were a speculator in land from Richmond, and a student of Princeton College, from Maryland, who had been nodding all the morning, but who made ample amends for his past silence as soon as his eyes were fairly opened.

Edward maintained a cautious reserve; but the Marylander flew from subject to subject, until he unconsciously struck upon a string which awakened all our traveller's

attention, though he was probably the only person in the stage who paid any regard to it. When the speculator wondered that he had come so far to attend college, and why he had not stopped in Virginia, the youth began to rail out very freely against William and Mary. He said the professors were men of no talents, their books were obsolete, their apparatus not fitted to illustrate modern discoveries, and that the town was filled with old maids, or young girls sent there to catch rich students; that twelve out of sixteen in one boarding-house were either married, or about to be so, at the last session; that a gentleman from New-York had sent his son there to divert him from an imprudent connexion, and that he had formed one a great deal worse; but that his father had lately succeeded in getting him back, and was going to marry him to his first love, whose father, not long since a bankrupt, had, by a lucky turn of fortune, got rich.

While this youth was thus giving vent to whatever came uppermost, Edward was on thorns; he was unwilling to enter into an altercation with one for whom he felt no respect, as he did not wish to discover himself; and yet was afraid that the freedom with which the young man spoke of all persons and things, and the heedless facility with which he blended truth and falsehood, would compel him to give a check to his censorious levity. But as none of the company made any comments on this episode, its loquacious author soon passed on to some other subject.

They dined at Trenton, and stayed at Princeton that night. The next morning they found some change in the passengers. The lady had complained of fatigue, and said she should remain in Princeton till the next stage; the student of course remained at his college. There was, however, an accession of two more students, going to pass some days in New York. They entertained the company with college anecdotes—talked politics with the

speculator—abused the British treaty—complimented Mr. Jefferson—execrated the electors in Virginia, by whom he had lost his election—and the next evening they reached Paulus Hook, opposite to New-York, just after candlelight. The twinkling of the numerous lights in the city made a very gay and striking appearance, and gave perhaps a livelier impression of the active population which inhabits it than a view by day, because it is more picturesque. Grayson reached the Tontine Coffee-House, in Wall-street, about nine o'clock. With some difficulty he made one of the waiters attend to his wants; and having taken a cup of tea, he retired early to rest, to refresh himself after a fatiguing and uncomfortable journey of nine days.

The speculator finding from some expressions which Edward had dropped that he was from Virginia, was at first disposed to shew him attention, and to aid him with the advice which it was evident he

wanted; but as he had several times reinforced the Marylander, when too hard pressed by his adversary, in reprobation of the British treaty, he conceived such a prejudice against him, such was the force of political intolerance at that time, that he was very cold in his civilities, and was put down at a boarding-house in Wall-street as soon as they arrived, and Edward never saw him afterwards.

He had learned in Philadelphia that his false friend was then in the city of New-York, and he determined to try what temperate measures would do, before he proceeded to harsh ones. His first object was, to ascertain where Gildon could be found. His father resided in Albany, and Edward did not know at what hotel or boarding-house the son might be then staying. At length, remembering to have heard Gildon speak of a Mr. James Cox, at whose house he was intimate, he called for a directory, and found there were four persons of that name. He thought he would inquire at the house of the one most

likely to be Gildon's friend, and seeing one of them had no designated occupation, Edward set him down for a gentleman, and accordingly went to his house, far up Greenwich-street, then containing but a few scattering houses. To save time, and prevent the mistakes which the irregularity of the city is so apt to cause in a stranger so little conversant with crowded streets as himself, he called for a hackney coach, and having directed the coachman where to drive, he was immediately whirled along from the Tontine, by many windings and turnings, to the place required. Edward had expected to see an elegant mansion, and had supposed the gentleman had wished to avoid the dust and bustle of the more crowded part of the city. He was conducted, however, to a small wooden house, with a piazza from one end to the other; and behind it was a garden, containing two or three small summerhouses, in a very dismantled condition. The whole had the air of a house of entertainment of some sort,

though there was no sign before the door. Two or three men of ordinary appearance were in the front room, before a coal fire, playing backgammon. Addressing himself to a dirty-looking servant girl who came out, he asked if Mr. Cox was at home?

"No, he's been gone these two days."

"When will he return?"

"That's more than I can say; he said he might be back last night."

"Does a gentleman by the name of Gildon visit here?"

"Ay, that's what he does; and other gentlemen too."

"Well, give this card to Mr. Cox when he returns," said Edward, leaving his name and address, and drove off.—He bade the coachman, by way of finding himself employment, drive out further in the same direction, and bring him back by a different route, that he might see something more of the city, whose singularly happy position, between two such noble pieces of water, he admired exceedingly. The coachman with alacrity obeyed his com-

mands, and whisked him at a pretty brisk rate towards the Bowery, then across to the East River, and thence, by several meanders, into Pearl-street, to his hotel.

Edward asked his charge, and he said, whatever the gentleman chose—but he supposed three dollars in all would not be too much.

Edward, who had never contested a bill in his life, felt unwilling to do so in a strange place, especially now that he knew himself poor; he paid it in silence, but thought if his expences should prove of a piece with this, he would soon be pennyless, in a place in which he knew but one individual, from whom nothing could have induced him to accept a favour.

He went into the large room of the coffee-house, and saw a throng of persons, talking news and politics, reading newspapers, looking over lists of arrivals or imputations—engrossing pursuits to those engaged in them, but foreign and unimportant to Edward. He felt utterly friendless and forlorn, and could scarcely have

thought it possible that he could have been any where in the United States, and seen so many persons in earnest conversation on subjects in which he could take so little interest. He walked about some time, and recollecting he was in a coffee-house, with great simplicity called for a cup of coffee. The bar-keeper, respecting Edward's appearance, and seeing that he was a gentleman, immediately directed one of the waiters to bring the gentleman a cup of coffee.

.. "Where will you have it, sir?"

.. "In my room, No. 36, if you please."

The obsequious waiter stared, looked at Edward with an inquisitive glance, and disappeared. He then seated himself in a chair in a corner, where he sat observing the faces of those who came to the bar, and by-and-by saw a thick, well-set man, with a great quantity of hair, plaited and fastened behind with a large comb, booted and spurred, and having a heavy whip in his hand, go to the bar, and, looking at a card, ask if Mr. Grayson of Virginia was

within? Edward immediately stepped forward, and being told the stranger's name was Cox, asked him into his room. When there, he began to apologize to Mr. Cox for the trouble he had given him.

"Oh, don't say a word of that, my dear fellow; it's all the same to me, here as there; but we should have been more snug at my quarters in Greenwich—what say you? Let's adjourn."

Edward looked at him, and suspecting some mistake, began to explain. The other, who had been rummaging an inside pocket while he was speaking, now drew out a pack of cards, and without noticing Edward's attempt at explanation, said—"You see, Mr. Grayson, I come provided; but pray what's your game?"

Edward's blood mounted into his cheek, and with a look of anger and contempt, replied—"Why, sir, what do you take me to be?"

The other stared in his turn.—"What do I take you for? why a thorough-bred Virginian. Is this your card?"

"Yes."

"Well, and what could I think you left it for, but to have a little sport? And I thought if you wanted to meet me on your own ground, I'd shew you I wasn't afraid; but then you see I fight with my own weapons," taking up the cards—"or turn and turn about, that's fair."

"Sir, I wanted to inquire for a Mr. Gildon of this state; I knew him to be well acquainted with a person of your name, and supposing you were the person, I called at your house to make the inquiry."

"I know nothing about your Gelding," said the other, with that sort of forced laugh with which a man backs a bad pun—"he's not been found by me—and if you don't like to try your hand, or these books don't suit you, there's no harm done. But I can tell you, mister, you broke up a merry set that was just seated; when they brought me this bit of pasteboard; and I'd advise you hereafter to be sure of your card before you play it."

"I'm sorry, on more accounts than one,"

said Grayson; "that I have fallen into this mistake; but I want no advice from you, and will take none—and either you or I must leave the room immediately."

"Sir, I'm a gentleman," said the gamester, "and will take an insult from no man, damn it; but I scorn to stay in any gentleman's room when I'm not welcome;" and putting the cards in his pocket, walked out with a swagger, muttering something about "Virginia done—the better for a little carrying."

Edward was greatly mortified and disappointed; though at another time he might have been diverted at the incident.

After some little delay he was served with the coffee he had ordered, which he found, on inquiry, they were not in the habit of furnishing, except at breakfast or supper. While he was drinking it, a waiter came in and said—"A gentleman wishes to speak with you, sir."

"Ask him in." On looking towards the door, his eyes were greeted with the sight of a young merchant from Frederick,

with whom he indeed had often dealt, and greatly esteemed, but had no particular intimacy. He never had before experienced so much pleasure from meeting a friend. Mr. Young, though not equally delighted, was in truth very much pleased to see him. He told Edward that he had come on to New-York in September to purchase goods, but had been seized with the yellow fever, from which he had a narrow escape; that he had been completing his purchases since his recovery, and on looking over the list of persons in the house, in the book kept for that purpose at the bar, and seeing Mr. Grayson's name, he thought he would satisfy himself whether he was the person, and was delighted that he had found him out.

The merchant then paused, and expected that Edward would be equally communicative. The latter was indeed so pleased at meeting with one whom he knew from his own county, that he, regarding Mr. Young as a particular friend, briefly related to him the object of his errand, sof-

tening the disagreeable parts of the affair as much as he could, consistently with the truth, and acquainted him with his present difficulty of finding Gildon in such a crowded place. Young smiled, and said that difficulty might be easily overcome by one acquainted with the city; and having obtained the very slender clue that Edward was able to give, he took a memorandum, and said he had no doubt he would in the course of the next day ascertain whether Gildon was now in the city.

They continued together in Edward's room talking about Virginia and Frederick, with a patriotic interest which is known only to persons abroad, until past midnight; and when Young got up to retire, Edward would have tried to detain him yet longer, if he had not recollected that his companion was a man of business, and could not take from the next day what he borrowed of the preceding night.

The following day Young, who knew what inquiries to make, and of whom to make them, soon ascertained that the

Mr. Cox whom Gildon probably visited was a wine-merchant in Pearl-street, but who had lately built a house in Broadway, as he and Mr. Gildon were associated in some foreign adventures. He had accordingly visited that Mr. Cox, and learnt from him that Gildon was then in the city, but expected to leave it in two or three days, and that he lodged at Mrs. _____'s, near the Battery.

Grayson, as soon as he received this intelligence from his friend, set out for Gildon's lodgings, and found he was out. He learned on inquiry that he would probably be in at dinner at three o'clock. He called at that hour, and finding Gildon was within, in order to avoid the embarrassment of a meeting in the presence of others, he gave the servant a slip of paper, on which was written with a pencil, that "E. G. wished to have an interview with J. G. at any place the latter would appoint." The servant was gone longer than seemed necessary, and returned with an answer on the same paper, that "J. Gildon

would give the requested meeting at five o'clock, at the Old Coffee House, and that Mr. Grayson might inquire for him at the bar." Edward returned to his lodgings, and the conflicting passions with which he was agitated prevented him from eating.

The hour at length arrived, and curbing his rising indignation, Edward went to the place appointed, and inquiring at the bar for Mr. Gilson, the bar-keeper said he was not in the house, but that he had sent a letter to be delivered to a gentleman who was expected to call for him, and presuming him to be the person, it was delivered to him. It ran in these words:—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“For in spite of appearances such I feel myself to be, and so I would still be considered by you, I have not attended you according to appointment, because I thought it more prudent, until we understood each other, that our intercourse should be only in this way. I am aware

that you may, judging from appearances, be disposed to believe that I have been a systematic deceiver; but believe me, Edward, the attachment I professed I sincerely felt, and nothing but the most cruel necessity could have induced me to adopt the course I have pursued. I resisted the wishes of my father as long as there was a chance of resistance being of any avail, and finding him inexorable, and on the point of abandoning me, I thought that a true regard for your — should induce me to make a sacrifice of my own inclinations, and that it was better to incur the blame of bad faith, than to deserve her reproaches as well as my own, for entailing on her the certain miseries of poverty, and the too probable chance of a bitter repentance. You are no doubt apprized that I have now put it out of my power to change the course which justice and real regard dictated, no less than prudence; and I trust your good sense will see, that while any altercation between us cannot undo what is done, it may give to the affair a

publicity which all parties ought to avoid. Nothing shall be said on my part that is calculated in the smallest degree to lessen the standing of — in the eyes of the world; and if she sustains any other injury than what may arise from a disappointment, which I trust is but temporary, it will assuredly not be owing to me. Believe me, Edward, I deserve your pity rather than blame. I have never ceased to cherish sentiments of exalted respect for every member of the amiable family of Beachwood, and I hope the time may yet come when I may shew with what profound sentiments of gratitude and respect their hospitality and kindness is remembered by their and your most obliged and devoted servant,

“ JAMES GILDON.”

The fiery temper of Edward could no longer contain itself on reading this piece of insolent mockery, as it appeared to him, though in truth the greater part of Gil-

don's letter was written in perfect sincerity. He stamped, bit his lips, and made ejaculations which were heard by some of the bystanders, whose inquisitive looks suggested to him the necessity of retiring. He went to his room, and with hurried steps paced it backward and forward for more than an hour, before he acquired self-possession sufficient to determine on the course he should pursue. He knew not to what Gildon alluded when he said he had put it out of his power to change his course; but his resentment and contempt were so great, that at that time he would not have consented that his sister should be allied to so utter a wretch.

Ere the fever of his wrath had subsided, Young knocked at his door, and his voice being recognised, he was admitted, and the letter shewn to him; after which Edward consulted with him on the course he should pursue.

CHAPTER VIII.
~~~~~

WHILE the friends are engaged in this deliberation, let us take a brief review of what had befallen the inconstant Gildon after he left Stanley. He took the stage at Stafford Court-House, and proceeded on to his father's in New-York. When he left Louisa, he was as much attached to her as he was capable of being, though he had lost some portion of the high respect he had previously entertained for her; such is the suicidal tendency of illicit love in its unceasing efforts to effect that which works its own destruction. But her beauty, her guileless, artless manners, and her devoted affection, produced their legitimate effect of filling his heart with the most ardent attachment; and ere he had reached New-York, he had several times very nearly resolved to return, and

yielding himself to the intoxicating draughts of love, to forego every thing else which he had hitherto deemed desirable.

He however continued to travel on, and when he reached the city of New-York, he there found his father. At first he was received very coolly, as the old gentleman soon perceived that he had come on, not because he was cured of his ill-fated attachment, but because he hoped to obtain his sanction to gratify it; and there was in consequence but little intercourse between them. Mr. De Peyster was settled in New-York, and success continued to attend him in all his undertakings. His daughter, who was a showy, dashing girl, was now thought a capital match for any one, and it afforded old Gildon a perpetual source of chagrin that his son had thrown away so valuable a prize. Gildon learnt of her eclat as a belle and a fortune at first with indifference: his heart was so filled with the image of the little rural beauty he had left behind him, that he had even lost his former desire of making him-



self agreeable; nor did he ever put himself in Miss Emily's way. Had he done so, the young lady would probably have repelled his advances with haughtiness, in revenge for former slights; but she, who received homage from all quarters, was piqued at Gildon's indifference, and sought an opportunity of meeting him, and of adding him to the train of her lovers.

Having once conceived the plan, there was no want of schemes for putting it in execution. She first endeavoured to meet Gildon at public places; but in that she failed, as he had not yet begun to frequent them. She tried to catch his eye at church, having gone to the one he usually attended for that purpose. She tried also to meet him in the street, or on the promenade of the Battery, which is so fine as to tempt the citizens of every description at all seasons, when the weather is fine; but all these schemes proved abortive. He was observed however to have become more lively than on his first arrival, and

she ascertained that he had been making inquiries of late about her.

Thus foiled in all her previous attempts, she adopted a more decisive course. Gildon was very intimate with a young man by the name of Cox, son of his father's friend, who was gay, lively, and dissipated, and they passed much of their time together. This young man had a sister, who was a homely girl, and had much of the humility that conscious plainness of person often inspires. Miss De Peyster had frequently met Miss Cox, especially since her father had launched once more into the fashionable world, but had never taken any more notice of her than of any other of the common-place beings who were continually passing and repassing before her. She however availed herself of the first occasion, at a small cotillion party, near Miss Cox's residence, to cultivate her acquaintance; and as this young lady felt very grateful for the attentions received from an established belle, and was ambitious of getting a certain

standing in the fashionable world, there being a very nicely graduated scale of rank in a large city; Miss Emily soon succeeded to the utmost extent of her wishes in obtaining the good graces of the other. She was from that time constantly dwelling on the praises of Emily De Peyster, on her "elegance, and grace, and wit; and then too, with so much flattery and attention, to be so free from airs." These praises she took occasion to utter in the presence of Gildon, for whom she felt a great deal of good will, though she had never aspired to make a conquest of him. At first these commendations were not heeded by Gildon, as they were little more than what had been dinned in his ears from several quarters; but one morning the young lady said to him—"Cousin James," as she always called him, "is Miss Grayson as handsome as Emily De Peyster?"

"Yes, a great deal handsomer. You might as well ask if a poppy is as handsome as a rose."

“Well, now, I much question it, and I have some reason for doing so; for there was a young gentleman here from South Carolina this summer, who said that Emily had as good features, and was so superior in manners and grace, that she was, beyond comparison, the finest woman.”

“Pshaw!” said he, “some flattering coxcomb! Do not I know them both?”

“Yes, but you have no idea how Emily has improved.”

“In complexion I suppose.”

“No, I am sure she does not use rouge, for the other day she was here, the morning we thought there was snow enough to sleigh, and some person coming up stairs, I observed—‘Ay, there is cousin James coming, now the snow is all gone;’ and she turned as pale as ashes. I am convinced she feels her old attachment, and that she will never get over it. She is always talking of you, and sometimes I think it is on your account that she seems of late to have taken such a fancy

to me. But I do not care, she is a sweet girl, and I am delighted with her."

: "She is the veriest coquette in the city of New-York, and that is a bold word, as they say in Virginia."

: "There too I am convinced you do her injustice. Has she not turned off every young man who has addressed her? and I impute that also to her attachment to you. Before your arrival, it was generally thought she was to have married young Rutledge, from South Carolina, but she has finally discarded him."

: These remarks sunk deeper into Gildon's mind than he seemed to admit, or indeed was aware of at the time; and he soon began to think it possible, that she who was a coquette to others might be sincerely attached to him, or that she had in fact altered for the better in disposition, as all admitted she had done in person and manners. He was gradually led by Schuyler Cox into parties of gaiety, until the pain of separation from the lovely

Louisa grew fainter and fainter, and he was getting to be a mere man of pleasure when this conversation with Miss Cox took place. His father (unwilling to attempt too violent a reform) was impatient to get him established in business; and after looking about for some time with his usual wariness and caution, concluded he could not do better than by forming the partnership that has been mentioned.

While he was calling in the money he had lent out, and introducing the new house to his distant correspondents, James, his son, had little else to do than to lounge about, and partake of the frivolous or sensual pleasures that were within his reach, and to which he was further invited by the precept and example of young Cox. In this dangerous state of idleness, when the soft scenes on the Shenandoah, or the more impassioned and culpable ones on the Potomac, were fast fading from his recollection, or remembered only as pleasing dreams, he was asked by Eleapor Cox to attend her to

the theatre, to see Mrs. Merry, who had recently arrived from England. As her brother was ill with an influenza he could not refuse; and indeed the little anecdotes which his cousin told of Emily had now begun to interest him, and he really wished to see her, but was ashamed to propose it. When he waited on Miss Cox in the evening, on opening the door of the parlour, he found there a lady alone, and who, to his not unpleasing surprise, proved to be Miss De Peyster herself. She was really agitated, and affected to be more so. He was somewhat confused, but emboldened by her apparent embarrassment, and the favourable footing he believed he yet retained in her heart, he accosted her with respect, but with much of his wonted easy assurance.

“He was happy,” he said, “that he, at last, had an opportunity of congratulating her on her return to the city, where she had so many friends, and which agreed so well with her health.”

She made a short and guarded reply, reserving herself, like a skilful boxer, who never aims a blow till he sees where to strike; and added—"I did not know that Eleanor expected company this evening. I came to take her with me to see the Honey-Moon."

"She has consented to put herself under my protection," said Gildon; "and if you would honour me with your company, we will have the satisfaction of being envied by half the audience, even if we should not be gratified with the performance."

Looking in his face very significantly—"I believe you have lost your relish for plays," she remarked, "by your residence in Virginia, though perhaps this one may be to your taste."

"I find my old tastes returning very fast," said he, "since I have breathed my native air. You know I used to be devoted to the drama, and first love, they say, will return."

He was not aware of the obvious appli-



cation that might be made of these words when he used them. The moment afterwards, perceiving their full import, he felt a slight confusion and hesitation; but the current of ideas once put in motion, could not be stopped.

“I have no faith in that,” said Miss De Peyster.

“I do not believe it either of your sex,” said he.

“If true at all,” said she, “it is true only of them. But here comes Eleanor.—Why, what have you been about, you naughty girl? you take as long to put on a tippet as I do to dress. Here is Mr. Gildon, who insists that he is as fond of plays as ever, though I believe I have not seen him at two since his return from that earthly paradise.”

“You mistake me a little, Miss De Peyster. I say, I think I shall be as fond as I ever was.”

“I will believe that when I see it.”

This partiality for the drama, by one of those tacit agreements that diplomatists

in love and gallantry so well understand, was thus made the type of his former attachment, and enabled them to carry on a conversation in which they could express their sentiments more freely, and were quite as well understood as if they talked openly and directly. It had the advantage of being taken literally by Miss Cox and her mamma, the daughter of a rich ship-chandler, of Dutch extraction.

The play was acted here for the first time, and was very well received, as it deserved to be. But there were few of the audience who were as much gratified as Mrs. Cox's party. She and her daughter had the satisfaction of thinking that two of the most fashionable young persons in the city were in their box. Emily De Peyster exulted at the success of her snare, and Gildon found himself pleased and flattered that he had so easily reinstated himself in her good graces. He found her greatly improved in appearance; she was dressed to the greatest advantage, and the more as there was an air of simplicity

and of graceful negligence which concealed the labour that had been actually bestowed in her decoration.

The young lady too had become more an adept in disguising the thousand little artifices by which coquettes allure, interest, and please. During her residence in the country she had narrowly watched, and successfully imitated, those reserved and retiring manners which she found to constitute much of the charm of rural beauties, and which she naturally supposed had been so instrumental in gaining the affection of Gildon. Amidst all her gaiety of heart, which she could not entirely rein in, she was occasionally serious, and even pensive; and as her manner was not uniform, Gildon, deceived by his vanity and self-love, thought that her *penseroso* mood was natural, and the *allegro* assumed. He asked permission to wait on her the next day, to which request, with a look of well-feigned surprise, she assented. Their sitting in the same box, and their frequent conversations, evidently animated and mu-

tually agreeable, were not unnoticed by their acquaintances, and gave rise to many humorous sallies and grave remarks, most of which, as is usual on such occasions, would have given no great pleasure to the objects of them. Between the acts, however, their box was thronged with the young men of the city, who pressed round the then reigning belle, as uniting more than any other the strong recommendations of beauty, fortune, and wit, or who, like other light substances, most felt the electric attraction of fashion. The little divinity they had created smiled propitiously on them all, and though she said little that was witty, or intended to be so, but was more reserved than usual, yet as she was known to be variable in her humour and character, according to the caprice of the moment, she gave no offence. They contented themselves with observing, that she was playing the *penseroso* this evening.

The next morning Gildon called on Miss De Peyster, and they passed an hour

or two very agreeably, in which their former *penchants* were still spoken of, under the disguise of a taste for the drama. But the morning after he called again, when even this slight veil was laid aside, and in the course of a week they both found themselves desperately enamoured, and vowed eternal love and constancy. The young lady had not intended to go thus far; she wished indeed to add Gildon to her train—she even had as much partiality for him as a professed coquette is likely to have; but she was unwilling to surrender her liberty so soon or so easily; she had not meant to forego the habitual triumphs of conquest, which she found so sweet, until her captive territories should be wrested from her by young competitors, or at any rate until she found herself less competent to wield the sceptre. But she was caught in her own snares. The meshes which she had so artfully woven for the prey she had set her heart on catching, had entangled her own feet; or, to quit

the metaphor, she began to feel the passion she had at first merely feigned; and Gildon, who had been led on step by step by his own vanity, his facility of temper, and natural inconstancy, became really attached to her; and since every consideration of prudence recommended her as an excellent match, he was earnest and ardent in soliciting her hand. Her prospects of fortune were considerable; his mercenary father would be overjoyed at the union; and he himself would have the glory of conquering where so many had failed.

Yet all this was not without many misgivings, and compunctious visitings of his conscience, when he thought of the sweet, the gentle, the lovely Louisa, whose beauty, as well as artlessness, he could not disguise from himself, were of far greater worth than the more glaring attractions of his countrywoman; and when he received a letter from Louisa, its simple and pathetic complaints, and expressions of affection and contrition, brought back his original feelings almost in their original

force; but these good impressions were but short lived. The fascinations of Miss De Peyster were constantly operative, and his intercourse with Cox and his gay companions, aided by the force of ridicule (so powerful with weak minds), to cure him of his romantic fancy, as they called his attachment to Louisa. To put an end to this conflict of feelings and motives, he pressed for an early day, and the lady consented to marry him early in December—that is to say, about a week after Edward arrived; and it was after the preliminaries were settled, that he wrote the cruel letter to Louisa that has already been laid before the reader, in which, to do him justice, there was more sincerity than he gained credit for.

He had received a timely intimation from his friend Mawly, that Edward had left Williamsburg for New-York, to call him to account, as was supposed, and he was advised to put himself on his guard. He therefore kept a steady look-out, and learnt, the day before he received Ed-

ward's visit, that he was in New-York. He would indeed have kept himself out of the reach of Edward's resentment, from shame rather than fear, if he had not been restrained by the same feeling of shame and dread of ridicule. He resolved however to elude his adversary for the present, and to soften him, if possible, by fair words, in the critical situation in which he stood.

After taking a review of Gildon's conduct, Young agreed it was that of an ungrateful and perfidious villain, who indeed merited the severest chastisement, but who, he was clearly of opinion, deserved no serious notice from Edward. But his friend declared that his course was fixed and unchangeable, and that he would punish such unprincipled baseness, or perish in the attempt; on which Young, finding him immovable, generously offered to act as his friend on the occasion, if he wanted one. The offer was gratefully accepted, and he wrote that night a note to Gildon, demanding satisfaction for the injury done



to his family. Young called at Gildon's lodgings the next morning about breakfast-time, and asked if he was at home? The servant said he was not. He was asked when he would be? The servant did not know—he supposed at dinner. As Young turned from the door, suspecting some evasion, he walked slowly under the parlour window, and recognised Gildon's voice (for he had known him in Frederick) at the breakfast-table, with several other young men. He then entered a bookseller's shop in the same street, and determined, under the pretence of looking over the new publications, to remain there till after breakfast. In about an hour a hack drove to the house, and he saw a man hastily enter it, whom he knew to be Gildon. He saw the carriage drive off towards Mr. De Peyster's: he immediately conjectured that the servant had been ordered to deny him, and pushing along as fast as he could towards Mr. De Peyster's, which was nearly a mile distant, he saw, when he came into the street,

the same coach, as he believed, returning. He went to the house of Mr. De Peyster, and told one of the servants, who appeared at the door, that he had a letter for Mr. Gildon, who had just gone in, which he wished to deliver in person. The servant said he would call Mr. Gildon down. He soon made his appearance, and seemed at once surprised, confused, and vexed, when he found that he had not been able to evade his pursuer. He then came forward and said, bowing formally to Young—"If you have any business with me, sir, it must be transacted at my lodgings. I am a stranger here, as well as yourself."

"That certainly would have been the most proper place," said the other, "if you had not ordered yourself to be denied to me this morning when you were at breakfast. As you would not receive this note there, you must take it here."

Gildon, suspecting treachery in the servant, and thinking it vain to deny what was so undeniable, took the letter, and on reading it, bit his lips, and turned pale.—

"Sir," said he, "do you know the contents of this letter?"

"I do, sir."

"And do you know the risk you run, of being accountable for such a violation of the law?"

"I have brought a letter from one gentleman, addressed, as I supposed, to another," said Young, "and I did not expect to be thus questioned. Mr. Grayson will expect your answer in the usual way;" and with a slight bow was about to depart.

"Stay, sir," said Gildon; "I have no wish to give unnecessary publicity to this disagreeable business, by using the intervention of a third person. I will send an answer by you, if you will do me the favour of being the bearer of it."

"Certainly, sir."

He then asked Young to take a seat in the adjoining parlour, while he went up stairs to make his apology to the family. He returned in a few minutes, and taking Young into the next public-house, he went into a private room; and after an absence of

more than an hour, returned with a letter to Edward.—“Sir,” said he to Young, “I have not accepted the invitation of Mr. Grayson, which must have been dictated on a sudden impulse; for had he reflected on the whole history of this unpleasant business, as well as the consequences of the course he is pursuing, he would see that it is calculated only to aggravate the evil of which he complains, and which, from the bottom of my heart, I sincerely deplore.”

He then entered into a laboured vindication of his conduct, by such arguments as he had before dwelt on with Edward, and urged Young to use his exertions to appease a resentment which was altogether unavailing, and might lead to the most injurious consequences. The other excused himself from taking any part in the business, except so far as he was invited or authorized by his friend, and withdrew.

Edward received his letter, which was a reiteration of what he had said to Young, with the most violent resentment—

“After inflicting,” said he, “injury on injury upon a family known to him only by their hospitality, he refuses to give one of that family the satisfaction he demands. He first insults us, and then bids us defiance.—The villain shall not escape me.”

Young again endeavoured to persuade him that Gildon's conduct was so thoroughly base and contemptible as to be utterly beneath his notice. He urged every argument of which he was master, but all in vain. Edward swore he would horsewhip him in public, let the consequence be what it might. He accordingly provided himself with that instrument of disgrace, and taking with him a pair of pocket pistols, well loaded and primed, he sallied forth towards Gildon's lodgings, before which he walked backward and forward, several times, in company with Young, who, finding he could neither assuage his wrath, nor divert him from his meditated course of violence, accompanied him from motives of friendship, and to prevent mischief as far as he could.

Edward was in such a state of excitement, that he paid little regard to what was passing around him; but Young, more cool and self-possessed, perceiving that they were eyed rather suspiciously by a mean-looking man, whom he took to be a constable or bailiff, urged him to change the course of his walk for a short time at least. He then went to the boarding-house, and inquiring of a mulatto servant, who made his appearance at the door, whether Mr. Gildon was at home, he was again answered in the negative.

The fellow, after Young was gone, began to think it strange that two persons should be so desirous of seeing a man who had been constantly going in and out, especially as he had observed Edward standing off in a watchful attitude, and with a lowering look, and conceiving that mischief might be intended, concluded it best to disclose what had passed. Accordingly, when Gildon came home, as he did at a late hour, in a hack, Thomson, as the mulatto called himself, followed him to his

room, and gave him a recital of what had occurred, for which Gildon thanked him, and gave him a gratuity. He sent for Cox early the next morning, and acquainting him with the occurrence, consulted him on the course he should pursue. Cox, who, amid all his dissipation, was not without spirit and family pride, advised him to accept Edward's challenge; or, if it was now too late for that, to throw himself in the way of a personal rencounter.—“These chaps have been so accustomed to lord it over their slaves, that they think they are to do as they please every where; but I'd soon teach them the difference, if I was in your case.”

But Gildon, though not deficient in personal courage, was unwilling to take either of these steps. He hated to confront Edward's honest indignation, and still more to give publicity to an affair, which he was conscious would be regarded as a violation of the dictates of honour, friendship, and hospitality, and would cover him with disgrace. He therefore determined to avoid

a meeting if possible; but if one should ensue, to be prepared for it.

Cox was accordingly dispatched to procure him a dirk; and he was already provided with an excellent pair of pocket pistols. Thus armed, he also thought it advisable to remain at home the rest of the day; but in the evening, knowing that he would be expected at Mr. De Peyster's, as usual, and fearing the disgrace and ridicule that would be attached to his longer staying at home, he ordered a hackney-coach, and rode off without interruption.

Edward, who had changed his lodgings to the hotel, for the purpose of profiting by the first opportunity of meeting his enemy, had kept within sight of the bar, looking every moment at the door in the expectation of seeing his agent come in to give the information agreed on, nor did he abandon all hope of receiving it until late at night. The next morning, after waiting some time, he grew impatient, when Young went to Gildon's boarding-house, and knocked at the door; after



some time, another servant came out, who said Mr. Gildon was not within, and immediately withdrew. While he stood fretting at thus being sported with by one servant or the other, a gentleman walked out; and Young, addressing him politely, asked if Mr. Gildon was within, observing that there seemed to be some mystery on the occasion with the servants, as he could not obtain the necessary information from them. The gentleman expressed his surprise at what he heard, and told him that Mr. Gildon had just gone into his room, and that he would make free to take him up, if his business was pressing. Edward, who had approached the door during this conference, forgetting every thing but the dictates of vengeance at the time, advanced and said—"You will confer a great favour on me, sir, by shewing me to Mr. Gildon's room." But as he and the stranger were turning to go up stairs, Young, whispering a few words to Edward, reminded him of the danger and impropriety of such a step; and having succeeded in

stopping him, he said aloud—" Mr. Gildon is probably engaged at this time, by the servant's denying he was at home; we can call again by-and-by, when he may be more at leisure;" and thanking the gentleman, they wished him a good-morning.

Convinced now that no reliance was to be placed on the information obtained from the servants, Edward determined to keep watch and ward for himself, in spite of his friend's renewed remonstrances, at a small distance from the house, until the object of his resentment should make his appearance. After walking to and fro more than an hour in the cold, for it was a sharp frosty morning, and seeing nothing of Gildon, Edward's anger began to subside into contempt. On further reflection, too, on the course he was pursuing, he entertained more serious doubts of its propriety. If, in a personal conflict, brought on by his attack, he thought, he should chance to take Gildon's life, the laws would undoubtedly pronounce him guilty of murder, nor would his conscience absolve him

altogether from its guilt; he could have no certainty of inflicting the disgrace he meditated, except by the assistance of arms; and if the death of his adversary should ensue, after thus lying in wait for him, it would have the air of an assassination, at which his proud and honourable mind revolted. The interest which his mother and Matilda had in his safety would have strongly enforced these arguments, but, by a determined effort, he would not allow his mind to dwell upon that subject.

While he was occupied with these reflections, Young, who had gone to see first about some business of his own, and then to the post-office, returned, and brought him a letter from Matilda, which was in these words:—

“ DEAR EDWARD,

“ Since we heard of your departure from Williamsburg for New-York, circumstances have developed themselves

to prove that Mr. G—— is as unworthy of the journey you have taken, as he is of the regard of your sister ; and I have no doubt I shall in time make her sensible of this ; but real affection is not easily eradicated from a woman's heart. I write this, then, my dear Edward, my most valued friend, to conjure you to bestow no farther thought or consideration on one every way so unworthy of you. Silent contempt, believe me, is the only course consistent with what you owe to yourself and your family. Oh, Edward ! remember the high and important duties, I beseech you, which you are now called upon to perform. A widowed mother, an orphan sister, have no other protector but you ; and I trust I too have some claims on your prudence, and some influence on your conduct. If I have, let it be shewn in your instant compliance with my earnest injunction, to return immediately to Virginia, and prosecute those studies which are so essential to your own success in life, the welfare of

your family, and the happiness of your own faithful

“MATILDA.”

After he had read the letter, he shewed it to Young, whom he now regarded as a confidential friend, and observed—“ I really begin to think the cowardly villain is beneath my notice.”

Young thought this a favourable time to reinforce his former arguments, and Edward finally consented to change his course, and content himself with publishing Gildon to the world as a poltron and a villain, which was immediately done by placards stuck up in the Tontine Coffee-House, and two or three other public places.

Although these were quickly removed by Gildon's friends, or some peaceable citizens, who disliked what had a tendency to disturb the public tranquillity, yet they were sufficient to give publicity to the af-

fair, and to furnish ample materials for the gossip of the city.

When Gildon found that he was held up to public scorn, and that the notoriety he so much dreaded was given to what all the world would call his dishonourable conduct, in the first instance, and the greater part of it his cowardice afterwards, he repented that he had not accepted Edward's challenge at once; and under the disgrace which the story, now circulating with a thousand exaggerations and distortions, heaped upon him, he almost felt, in his turn, the resentment of an injured man. His success with a reigning belle made him an object of envy moreover with a number of young men, who exulted in his present difficulties, and readily propagated every injurious rumour concerning him. Young, who was extensively acquainted with the mercantile part of the city, had told of his engagement to Louisa—of her beauty and sweetness—of the character and standing of her family—of its hospitality to Gildon, and

of his coming to New-York, under the pretext of soliciting his father's consent to his marriage.

Several of the citizens, either because they were incensed against Gildon by this tale of baseness and perfidy, or from the generous motive of giving countenance to an injured and a friendless stranger, sought Edward's acquaintance; and his handsome person, cultivated talents, and very dignified manners, never failed to make those respect him for his own sake who had at first shewn him civility from some extrinsic motive.

Amidst the buzz of rumours which were in circulation, one was, that the young Virginian meant to horsewhip Gildon whenever they met; and another was, that Miss De Peyster was so greatly mortified at the want of gallantry in her lover, that she had broke off the match. These reports, as is usually the case, were partly true and partly false. Edward, as we have seen, once had the intention of

making a personal attack; but afterwards declined it; and Miss De Peyster had not discarded her lover; but her pride had been so mortified at the disgrace he had incurred, that she had postponed their marriage until he could clear up the imputations against his character, which, she said, were not more inconsistent with his honour, than with the account he had given her of his conduct towards Miss Grayson.

If at any place of fashionable resort Gildon happened not to be present, it was immediately whispered by his enemies, that he was afraid to shew himself; and not a few mischief-loving idlers and street loungers busied themselves in reporting the alleged taunts, or threats, or abuse of the parties, for the purpose of bringing about a meeting between them.

Cox, who was more in the way of hearing these rumours, insisted with his kinsman that it was indispensable for him to prove to the world that he had not refused to meet Grayson from pusillanimity, but from the generous motive of forbearing to



inflict further injury on a family whose feelings he had already been the unwilling instrument of wounding.

Goaded thus by the dread of public shame and ridicule, the fear of losing his mistress, and by resentment at the immediate cause of his vexations, he resolved, after three or four days, that he would no longer shun the places of public resort, but go well armed, and prepare himself for the worst. In the mean time, the civil authority, hearing some of the reports in circulation, was disposed to interfere to prevent the threatened mischief; and the peace-officers were instructed to arrest the young men, and bring them before a magistrate, if there should be the least symptom of disorder at a political meeting which was that day to take place at a hotel in Broadway, where it was rumoured they would both probably be. Gildon had gone there, in company with Cox, and seeing nothing of Edward or his friend, they, and the small party which supported them, exulted at this refuta-

tion of the slander that had been circulating against Gildon; and to make their triumph more complete, they determined to walk down Wall-street towards the Tontine Coffee-House, and mingle in the crowd which assembled there every day at that hour, among whom they would be certain to find one, and probably both.

Edward having now staid in New-York as long after he had published Gildon as the most fastidious honour could require, began to think of returning to Virginia. He had passed the early part of the morning in writing to his mother and Matilda, after which he took his customary walk with his friend Young; and when, on their return, they had got within twenty yards of the coffee-house, Gildon and Cox, walking arm-in-arm, were just leaving the crowd, and were chuckling and exulting at their fancied success. Edward, who was the first to perceive them, boiling with indignation at the sight of the author of so much misery to his family, so apparently happy and triumphant in his

villany, forgot his previous determination, and running up to him, said—"Villain, take the punishment of a coward, since you would not risk that which may be inflicted on a man of spirit!" and gave him several strokes with his cane.

Cox, disengaging himself, cried—"Close with him—close with him, Gildon!"

The latter, recovering from his first surprise, did so; and being somewhat stronger in the arms, was about to wrest the cane from Grayson's hand; but he, letting go the cane, took out one of his pistols, at the sight of which Gildon drew his dirk, and as a last effort of self-preservation, stabbed the unfortunate Edward to the heart, whose pistol going off at the same time, wounded his antagonist slightly in the arm.

Edward reeled, and was falling, just as Young, who, as well as Cox, in the first surprise, knew not what part to act in this deadly conflict, received him in his arms. He barely was able to say—"Hea-

ven forgive me—I am a dead man—my poor—mother!” and expired.

The report of the pistol brought great numbers to the spot. There were indeed several present before they had drawn their weapons; but the fear of receiving injury, and that suspension of the faculties which such scenes occasion with the generality of men, prevented any one from interfering, until interference was useless. The crowd in a populous city is constantly receiving new accessions, until the number of those whose curiosity is satisfied is equal to those with whom it is yet keen. A constant buzz of inquiry ran through the crowd, while many told what they had seen or heard from eyewitnesses, and made out stories that bore little resemblance to the truth. Some saw the murderer in a green coat and yellow top boots give the first blow, and then draw his dirk and stab the deceased three times. Others saw the deceased cock his pistol, and snap it twice before it went off, or the other drew his dirk. So various and so

contradictory were the accounts of the bystanders, that it would have been impossible for a stranger to have ascertained the particulars of the affray on the very spot where it took place.

Gildon was immediately taken into custody, and carried before a magistrate, followed by a large crowd of the rabble; while the body of the ill-fated Edward, attended by a more numerous and respectable multitude, was carried to the coffee-house. His handsome features, unchanged in death, except as to paleness, and his genteel dress, profusely stained with his blood, greatly increased the favourable prepossessions of the bystanders; and the narratives given of the rencounter were, nearly all, more or less coloured by the lively pity which his youth, beauty, and untimely end, contributed to excite.

Every proper respect was paid to his remains by Young, assisted by some of the most respectable persons of the city. They were deposited in the south-west

corner of Trinity Churchyard, and the young men of the city placed a marble slab over them, as a tribute of hospitality to virtue and misfortune; and in raising the fund for the purpose, it was observed, that among the most liberal subscribers were the discarded lovers of Miss De Peyster, so mixed are the motives of all our actions, whether good or bad. This memorial, so honourable at once to its authors and its object, may be yet seen in a mouldering state, almost hid by the rank grass which surrounds it.

The painful task of communicating this mournful occurrence to Grayson's friends devolved on Young. He sat down, and made several attempts to write, first to Mrs. Grayson, and then to major Fawcner; but he finally declined it, concluding that as he should set out immediately for Frederick, it would be better to be the bearer of the melancholy tidings himself.

CHAPTER IX.  
~~~~~

THIS tale of the ruin of a once prosperous and respected family draws to a close. Young, having paid off the bills for the funeral expences with mercantile punctuality and exactness, set out in the stage for the south, and proceeded without delay to Alexandria, where he found no difficulty in sending up his baggage by a waggon to Frederick, and of hiring a horse for himself. His object was to go directly to the house of Mr. Trueheart, knowing his intimacy with the Grayson family, for the purpose of communicating the melancholy tidings. Not finding him at home, he proceeded to Mrs. Grayson's new residence, and met the worthy man on his return from the visit which has been mentioned.

The barrister was pleased to see him,

and congratulated him on the recovery of his health, and return to Frederick, but was struck with the seriousness of his countenance, and the solemnity of his manner.—“ Yes, sir,” said he, “ I return in good health myself, but am the bearer of melancholy tidings to some of my Frederick friends.”

“ Why, what’s the matter?” said the old man eagerly; “ has any thing happened to Edward Grayson?”

“ He lost his life in a scuffle with Gildon.”

“ Oh, the viper! were you present?”

“ I was, sir; I caught him as he fell, and I waited to attend his funeral.”

“ Why did you not take the villain’s life before he could have perpetrated such an act?—Alas! alas! this unexpected stroke of fate must overwhelm his poor mother, who has supported herself under unexampled calamity with the patience of an angel. The ways of Heaven are dark and unfathomable: here is a family, possessing every virtue and grace, fitted to

enjoy happiness and comfort beyond any other I ever knew, that are overwhelmed with every species of affliction—death, sickness, poverty, treachery of friends: but it is not for us to arraign what we cannot understand: the whole world, and all it contains, is an inexplicable mystery.—But what shall we do, my dear sir? how disclose this terrible piece of intelligence to the good lady?”

“That is what I wanted to consult you about,” said Young; “I have been to your house, and hearing you were here, without staying but one night at home, I rode over, in the hope of reaching Mrs. Grayson’s before you had left it.”

“Stay—we must consider,” said Trueheart; “I have just left them in a state of comparative quiet and comfort. Louisa has been dangerously ill, from distress of mind at that monster’s conduct towards her, and she has now so far recovered as to walk about and ride out; she is even cheerful, either from the precepts and heavenly example of her pious mother, or be-

cause she nourishes some secret hope of her lover. To disclose the news abruptly, in her present weak state, might be the death of her—it must be broke to her by degrees. Mrs. Grayson is a woman of wonderful fortitude, strengthened by a firm and implicit conviction that all she suffers is by the immediate ordinance of God, and for some good, though often unknown end; give her time, and she will bear it.—But, poor lady, to what purpose prolong a life deprived of its last comfort? I am persuaded her heart has been for some time dead to all pleasure, except what she derived through her children, or from her charities or religious exercises.—Well, poor Edward! cut off in the flower of youth and hope, knowing nothing but sorrow, and anxiety, and crosses, since he came to man's estate, but with better prospects opening before him. He is like a mariner, who, after weathering the most furious storms, has been wrecked just as he was going into harbour.—Did he get any letter from me?"

“ He did, with several others besides, and they determined him to change his intended course. But for a casual meeting, when his indignation got the better of him, he had been safe now in Frederick.” Young then gave a circumstantial detail of what the reader has already learnt, to which Trueheart listened with painful interest, and ever and anon a tear stole down his wrinkled cheek.

“ Well, Mr. Young, there is no help for it now; it behooves us, as we cannot restore the dead, to do what we can for the living—we must prepare them for the shock. But what is the best mode? Let me see—it will not do for you to go, or for me to return; they would suspect the truth. I will write; and while I shall state nothing but the truth, I will take care not to state the whole truth. Nothing has so afflicted me since the death of her father, one of my best and earliest friends.”

He accordingly, with Young, proceeded on to the first house on the road, and

stepping in, sat down, and addressed a letter to Mrs. Grayson, in which he stated that Morgan Young, whom she knew, had just returned from New-York, and had left Edward there—that her son would not be able to leave that city immediately—that he (Trueheart) would endeavour to learn the cause of his detention, and let her know it, either by letter or in person.

He requested the master of the house to allow his son, an active lad of about sixteen, to carry the letter to his farm on the Opeccan, where the widow of colonel Grayson was now residing. The man made some difficulty at first; but upon Trueheart's saying to the lad he would give him a dollar, he removed all obstacles, by saying he would ride the "stud;" and accordingly, he was desired to give that letter into the hands of one of the white family, or a house-servant, and without staying until it was read, or to answer questions, to return immediately.

The boy took the letter, and in less than two hours was at the little gate of

the enclosure round the house. The quick-pace at which the large and clumsy horse on which he was mounted proceeded, lumbering over the hard frozen ground and stony road, was heard for some distance before he reached the house, and the eyes of Mrs. Grayson and of the servants were directed that way. When, instead of proceeding on, he turned down the road which led to the house, that lady had a fear of some ill tidings, and, as it has appeared to her since, a strange presentiment that the boy was the messenger of bad news. In a trice the lad was at the fence, dismounted, opened the gate, and was at the door, and holding the letter in his hand, said—"This is for Mrs. Grayson."

"I am the person," said she much agitated.

He delivered it into her hand, and with as much haste as he had come, he returned, mounted his horse, and was out of hearing before the good lady had read the letter, or at least had the thought of inquiring of the messenger where he received

ed it—who was present—and who Mr. Trueheart had seen in the short time since she had parted from him. Finding that no satisfaction could be obtained from this source, she began to form conjectures on the cause of Edward's detention, and naturally apprehended that he was engaged in a controversy with Gildon. She sometimes thought that Mr. Trueheart must have formed some unpleasant apprehensions himself, by his sending off an express to give her information that was better calculated to make her uneasy than to give her satisfaction; but his known character for candour and fair dealing soon repelled this impression.

She was, upon the whole, more uneasy than the intelligence strictly warranted; and if there be any mysterious and inexplicable connexion between our feelings and distant events, as the experience of every close observer has often almost persuaded him, then had Mrs. Grayson somewhat of this preternatural warning of the calamity that had befallen her. In spite

of all the efforts of her reason, her fears overpowered her, and she wept in bitterness, she hardly knew why. She was not able to conceal the letter from Louisa, but she concealed her unfavourable auguries from her. Louisa, on the other hand, always disposed to hope, where she could perceive the least ground for it, drew an auspicious inference from her brother's detention, as if a favourable result should be hopeless, or a rapture with Gildon should take place, his stay would not be so protracted as Mr. Trueheart's letter would lead them to expect. That night was, therefore, spent by Mrs. Grayson in the prayers and tears of an alarmed and devoted mother—and by her daughter in the sanguine hopes of love.

The next day was passed without any occurrence worthy of notice, except that Mrs. Grayson's fears were somewhat abated, and Louisa's hopes somewhat confirmed. The day after, the arrival of letters from the nearest post-office was anxiously expected. They accordingly received one

from Mr. Trueheart, saying that he had it in his power to give them some further particulars of Edward's movements in New-York. That he had been so violently incensed at Gildon's manifest evasion and want of faith towards his sister, that he had sent him a challenge; but Gildon having refused to accept it, that Edward had threatened him with personal chastisement. Trueheart then added, that he had good reason to believe, that the letter which he told her he had written to Edward, advising moderation, and an immediate return to his studies, had arrived before he had carried his threats into execution; but on the other hand, if he had meant to take his advice, he might have returned with Mr. Young, as his letter must have reached New-York some days before Young left the city.

This letter, which strengthened Mrs. Grayson's fears, extinguished the last remaining hopes of her daughter. She relapsed into her former state of grief and despair; and all that her mother could

say and do seemed to have no sort of effect for the first night, in allaying the acuteness of her sufferings. She herself endeavoured to prepare for the worst.

“It is the will of God,” said she, “that I am no longer to know the comfort which children can give. Perhaps I have had my share of happiness in this life; and then I was not sufficiently sensible of it, or thankful for it. The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, and I must submit.”

Mr. Trueheart further mentioned, that he had fallen in with Mr. Young, who knew the particulars of the quarrel, and he would bring him over to see Mrs. Grayson the next day.

They accordingly arrived the next morning about eleven o'clock, with heavy hearts, on one of the most ungrateful of all missions. They both entered with that serious air which suited their feelings and the occasion; and Mrs. Grayson was so agitated when they entered, that she could scarcely ask them to sit down.

“ How long is it since you left New-York, sir ?”

“ A fortnight to-morrow, madam.”

“ I understand you saw—my son there,” her voice faltering.

“ I did, madam.”

“ You left him behind, I understand.”

“ Yes, madam,” said the kind-hearted young man, his lively pity for the mother not permitting him to undeceive her ; but his feelings rejecting all artifice, an involuntary tear came into his eyes. This could not escape the vigilance of a mother, who then unravelled their well-intended plot at once.

“ Oh, my God !” she exclaimed with vehemence, “ my son is dead !—tell me, gentlemen—let me know the worst—oh ! I see it—I see it—he’s shot—he’s stabbed—he’s murdered—he’s fallen in a duel !”

Her clasped hands raised to heaven, her upturned eyes streaming with tears, and her pale, woe-gone visage convulsed with agony, would have melted stouter hearts than those who then saw her. Unable

longer to act their parts, they also burst into tears, and sobbed like children. In this communion of feeling, it was long before they could give the wretched, heart-broken mother any particulars of the tragic event; nor, stunned and overpowered as she was, by the fact of her son's death, did she seem desirous of learning any thing further. In the first burst of her grief, all her precepts of religion, all her habitual resignation and fortitude gave way, and nature resumed her power uncontrolled. She had hitherto been commonly silent in her grief, but she now went about the room like one bereft of reason, as was in fact the case for the moment.

“Oh, my Edward,” she exclaimed, “the joy and pride of my life; born to honour his country and his species; oh, how my heart exulted in my noble-minded son! Forgive me, gracious Heaven! I thought too much of the creature, too little of the Creator. I am humbled for my pride—humbled to the dust. Why, oh God! am

I suffered to live?—oh, my Edward, my son, my noble son—my glory—the day-star of my existence is extinguished for ever!" and thus she went on in ejaculations of praise, or of bitter complaint, and almost of expostulation. Sometimes a torrent of tears would drown her voice, and sometimes their sources appeared to be dried up; now she would stop, and seemed lost in reverie; then suddenly starting, she would pour forth the feelings of a mother in strains of the most melting and impassioned eloquence.

As soon as Mr. Trueheart had sufficiently recovered himself, he asked her in a gentle tone of voice, to endeavour to compose herself, and since she knew the worst, to hear the recital of the particulars from an eyewitness. She sat down, but before Young had proceeded far in his narrative, her feelings were so much excited, that she again rose from her seat to indulge in the same extravagance of grief as before.

Louisa, who felt extreme repugnance to

see strangers, had left the room when she saw the gentlemen enter, but returned as soon as she heard her mother's exclamations; and inferring the truth from the few words she heard, she threw herself into her mother's arms, and they had a warm embrace; but in a little while Mrs. Grayson extricated herself, and without further noticing her daughter, walked about the room, wringing her hands, and ejaculating as before.

Several unsuccessful efforts were made before the poor woman could hear out the whole melancholy tale. When it was ended, Trueheart, who knew she must be exhausted by such violent agitation of mind, recommended her to seek some repose. She shook her head, and broke out into a fresh burst of grief. The kind-hearted man then left the room where the mother and daughter were mingling their bitter tears, and having requested the woman Isabel to attend on her mistress, and to prevail on her to take some rest;

he and his companion took their leave; he for the friendly purpose of sending Mrs. Trueheart, as had been previously arranged, and of requesting Mr. M'Culloch to carry his wife, who was known to be a great favourite with Mrs. Grayson.

As soon as the dreadful news reached the servants, they, one and all, rent the air with shouts of grief. They were all strongly attached to Edward on account of his kindness and generosity; for though he would often, hasty and impetuous as he was, give them angry words, and until he had learned to curb these sallies of passion, occasionally a blow, he more than made them amends by his liberality, by his ready disposition to indulge them in all their wishes, and by the frank and familiar manner in which he often conversed with them. The tribute of affection which they rendered, on hearing the afflicting intelligence, came warm from the heart, though their manner of shewing their grief is ostentatious, and has so much of a theatrical air as often to give sus-

picions of its sincerity. Wretched as were this helpless mother and daughter, there was another heart in Frederick which was about to feel the loss of this generous youth yet more severely.

When Matilda Fawcner returned to her paternal seat, the day before the Grayson family quitted Beachwood for the last time, her heart was filled with anxious apprehension for the safety of her lover, and sympathy for the distresses of his wretched sister and mother. In her generous efforts to afford consolation to her friends, she had alleviated her own sufferings; but when the necessity for those efforts had ceased, she viewed with dismay the perils that one of Edward's fiery temper must incur, in vindicating the injured honour of his family. She had already written to beseech him to return, and it appeared to her that she could urge new arguments, and press them with still greater force; she resolved therefore that she would write to him a long letter on the following day, which was the post-day for the north.

She had been greeted by her father when he met her with his usual warmth and tenderness; and there was more of kindness in her mother's manner than had been common for some time; both because of the change in her sentiments that has been adverted to, and because the distress of mind, and the fatigue of watching and nursing her friends, having greatly affected Matilda's appearance, had roused her maternal fears for the safety of an only child.—“Indeed, Matilda,” says she, “you never go to Mrs. Grayson's but you return as haggard as a witch, and as pale as death;” but lest her daughter should suppose she was actuated by her former feelings, she added, “not that I have any objection to your spending as much of your time as you can spare, as there is no family in the county I would so soon see you intimate with as that; but you must not stay so long, for you will wear out your constitution in nursing them.”

“Oh, mother, they need all the attention and sympathy their friends can be-

stow; and I ought not to grudge the trouble it may cost me, if my society could afford them any gratification, as I trust it can. They set out to-morrow for their new residence on the Opeccan, and I have promised to visit them as soon as I hear they are settled. I trust that Louisa no longer needs my nursing; but I fear that she and her mother will long require consolation."

She then detailed to her, as they withdrew to her chamber, as much of their affairs as she thought her friends would not object to her disclosing, on which Mrs. Fawcner remarked—"There is a letter from Frederick Steener, who apologizes for not delivering it as he had been requested. I made free to open it, and found a letter from New-York, which I hope may enable you to give some welcome news to Mrs. Grayson."

Matilda eagerly caught the letter from her mother, who thus indirectly, for the first time, had given her sanction to her

daughter's correspondence with Edward, though she had long known of it.

This letter, the reader will perceive, had been written by Edward immediately after he had sent the challenge to Gildon, to excuse his conduct to her in case he should fall; and after the challenge was refused, and he had abandoned all thought of personal satisfaction, he had neglected to destroy the letter, but suffered it to remain on the mantlepice in his room. Young seeing it there after Edward's death, and knowing nothing of its contents, put it in the post-office the same day.

Matilda hastily opened it, and, pale and breathless, read to the following purport :—

“ *New-York, November 1796.*

“ How shall I justify myself to my beloved Matilda for the course I am about to pursue? Ere this reaches her, she will be apprized of the motives which brought me here, and which will regulate my conduct. The present is one of those

occasions in which reason points one way, and feeling impels another. Oh! if all the world were like you, Matilda, the case might have been different; so far as the sentiment of vengeance is concerned, or my individual indignation, the eloquent arguments I have heard you urge on this subject would be successful; but unfortunately they are lost upon the world in general; and the opinion of the world, however we may affect to despise it, who is it that dare disregard?—who can venture to brave its decrees of ignominy?—or, if he has this superior firmness, where is the man who would not be ruined by his rashness? The very persons who would advise him to such a course would be among the first to despise him. No, Matilda, trust me I had no alternative—I had come here for a certain purpose; when I arrived, I found the legitimate causes of resentment—the injuries to those whom it is my duty to protect, far greater than I had supposed them to be. I had taken my course, that course which those who set

themselves-up for judges in such cases pronounced to be right, and I had gone too far to recede—I was obliged to go on, or to return to you and to my family dishonoured and disgraced. That could never be; I must offer you a name and a reputation on which rumour had never breathed reproach, nor suspicion left a stain. I have demanded satisfaction for the injury to my family's honour in the only way in which it can be obtained, and I put my own life to hazard on the attempt. That honour would not have been worth preserving if I had hesitated. Should I survive, all will be well, and I shall trust to making my peace with you in person; but if Heaven adjudge otherwise, to its wise decree I submit. This letter will inform you of the fact, and I trust plead my apology. Oh then, sweetest, noblest, loveliest of women! do not, in the censure which you may pass on my conduct, lose any of your regard to my memory; for it will be my sweetest consolation in death, as it has been the joy and pride of my life, that I

possessed your regard. This subject is a dangerous one; I dare not give utterance to all that I feel, or I should be ill qualified for the course I have prescribed to myself. In one word then, forgive, pity, and remember, your devoted

“ EDWARD.”

Matilda's colour had been seen to come and go as her eye ran over the paper, and when she came to the conclusion, which made its reception depend upon his fate, she let it drop, and clasping her hands, and turning her eyes in beseeching agony to Heaven—“ Oh God,” she exclaimed, “ suffer not a wretch to live, who is no longer fit to discharge the duties of life!” and hurried out of the room.

Mrs. Fawkner, who, though not of very acute sensibility, had suffered very much by her daughter's apparent distress, being desirous of informing herself of the cause of her violent emotion, took up the letter, and inferring from it that Edward had

fallen in a duel with Gildon, forgot her former animosity, and sincerely regretted his loss; but was chiefly excited by maternal fear for the effect the intelligence would have on Matilda. She followed her daughter into her chamber, and finding all was still, she doubted whether she was within. She opened the door softly, and found her in one corner of the room, by the side of the bed, on her knees, with her face and eyes turned towards heaven, expressing at once despairing grief and ardent devotion. She was so struck with the force of feeling delineated in her countenance, that she was held some moments in suspense; but maternal sympathy overcoming every other feeling, she went up and cried—"Oh, Matilda, don't take on so—do not, my dear Matilda—it is sinful to grieve so." And as if it would sooth her daughter's sorrows, she added—"Oh, he was a fine young man, every body thought well of him—and your father and I have both been talking of him and you of late, and of his prospects. But do not

grieve so—Matilda!—Matilda!—my child, why don't you speak to me? Are you displeased with your mother? It was all intended for your good."

Matilda turned her eyes on her mother, and shook her head, as much as to say, nothing was farther from my thoughts. She continued however her supplicating attitude, and seemed yet engaged in the act of prayer. Her mother endeavoured, by the kindest and most persuasive manner of which she was capable, to draw her attention.—“ Oh, Matilda, you will break your poor father's heart, and mine too!”


At the mention of her father's name, the poor girl, who had concluded her act of devotion, started from her trance, while her eyes shed a few scalding tears, and exclaimed—“ My poor father!—where is he?”

“ In the parlour,” said Mrs. Fawkner, who had been alarmed at the fixed stare and tearless eyes of her daughter: “ shall I bring him to you?”

“ If you please, madam,” said Matilda, with apparent composure.

Mrs. Fawkner soon returned with her husband; and the kind-hearted man, who almost idolized his daughter, seeing in her face, though she did not weep, the agony that was rending her heart, went up to her, and unable to speak another word, but "Oh, my daughter!" sobbed on her neck, as if his heart would break; Mrs. Fawkner all the while endeavouring to check him in thus giving way to his feelings, and increasing the distress of Matilda. She again shook her head, and said, with some calmness, "Mother, nothing can add to what I feel."

The major then seated himself by his daughter, and took her hand without speaking—and often casting his eyes on her face, on which he saw utter despair, and a fixed look that he thought indicated a wandering of the mind, his grief returned in all its violence. But neither the entreaties of Mrs. Fawkner to her daughter, nor her expostulations to her husband, nor his lively grief, seemed to have any effect upon Matilda, or to direct



her thoughts from the strong current in which they ran.

After an hour had been passed in this way, which seemed like three or four to the anxious parents, Matilda rose from the seat she had occupied ever since her father entered, and going to her toilette she took up a cambric handkerchief, tied it tight round her brows, and began to walk up and down the room. Her mother inquired if she had the headach, offered her volatile salts, and said she would bring her a mustard plaster; all of which she rejected as before, without speaking. But Mrs. Fawkner insisting she should take something for the sake of her parents, if not for her own, she consented, and immediately preparations were made to bathe her feet, and give her a composing draught.

Major Fawkner now asked his wife how Matilda got the news, on which she shewed him Edward's letter. He was greatly relieved when he saw the handwriting.

"Why, Molly," said he, "this cannot be the letter: this is from Edward Grayson himself."

"Read it," said she; "it was not to be sent unless he should fall."

He then read it, and remarked there might yet be some mistake. It might have been sent without his intending it, or he might be wounded, and have recovered.—"I heard yesterday that Young, the merchant, had returned, and had gone to Mrs. Grayson's with Trueheart: no doubt he can give an account of the whole affair."

At that moment the servant said, that Mr. M'Culloch was in the parlour. When he entered, the major saw in the face of his old friend the melancholy errand on which he had come.

"I suppose, major, you have heard the news," said M'Culloch.

"Of Edward Grayson?" said the other; "is it true that he was killed in a duel?"

"No, not exactly that," said M'Culloch—"but he's no longer for this world

of wo;" and he then related the particulars as he had learned them from Young.

"And does your daughter know it?"

"She does."

"And how does she bear the news?"

"Bad enough, my dear friend; I fear she will never get over it."

"Matilda is a girl of a strong mind and good understanding, major. Leave her to herself awhile; it is natural and right she should grieve at first; for to be sure he was a noble youth, and I know not where you could find such another in all the Valley. But her good sense will bring her right, major; may be she would not dislike to see an old friend; though it may grieve her too to see one that she knows was so partial to the poor fellow that's gone," wiping his eyes.

Major Fawkner then briefly stated what had passed; that she was in bed, and they were endeavouring to compose her to rest, on which the old man took his leave.

Matilda rose betimes the next day, and in answer to the inquiries from her pa-

rents, she said she was better, but her looks shewed that she had had no sleep, or none of that rest which refreshes and invigorates. Her parents both went to her chamber before breakfast, but barely went to see her and speak to her, without remaining in the room. They were pleased to find her dressed, but she had the same wan, haggard look of despair as the day before. Major Fawkner, taking her hand, said—"My dear, your old friend, Mr. M'Culloch, called last evening to see you."

"Oh!" said she lifting up her hand, "the last spark of hope is then gone—there is now no doubt;" still looking at her father, as if however some spark of hope yet lingered in her breast; but his streaming eyes answered her inquiries, and she again threw herself on her knees, and in a few words uttered audibly—"Oh God! pity my weakness, and aid me, while I henceforth devote myself to thy service."

The parents both wept freely, but Mrs. Fawkner occasionally exhorted her daughter to allay her grief, by all the topics that

are so commonly and so vainly used on such occasions. By-and-by her little dog, which had been purposely kept out of her sight by the considerate servants, on whose neck was a collar which Edward had given her, and had put on the last time he was at the Elms, having, while they were engaged at their breakfast, found means of escape, came patting up stairs, and made a noise at the door, by which he usually gained admittance. Major Fawknier went to the door, and opening it, little Fido ran up to his mistress, wagging his tale, and looking wistfully in her face, as if waiting for the caresses to which he was accustomed. Her eyes being turned towards the floor, and lighting upon the dog and his collar, the sight awakened a train of tender recollections, and for the first time she wept aloud. When her tears had once began to flow, they ran in a stream, and crimsoned her cheek, that was before of a deathlike hue. Her parents, though rather pleased to see her grief venting itself in a natural way,

mingled their tears with hers in silent sympathy.

She did little on that, and the two following days, but weep and walk about her room; and in spite of all that could be said, she scarcely took nourishment enough to sustain life. The first subject on which she conversed was to inquire about Mrs. Grayson and Louisa, and the next was to know the particulars of her lover's fate. She seemed to feel great relief when she found that he had not fallen in a duel, and that her letter had had, in a great measure, its intended effect. In the course of a week she left her room to go to the dining-room, which she afterwards continued to visit when there was no person present but her own family. She expressed a wish to see Mrs. Grayson, from whom she heard every day; but her mother appeared so unwilling that they should add to each other's grief by an interview, that Matilda desisted. After a fortnight spent in gloomy and silent meditation, she began to read some fa-

avourite religious anthems, but it was observed that she seldom read long in any one, but would pass from one to another with a feeling of disappointment. The sermons of Bourdaloue were said, however, to be her favourites. A Roman Catholic priest of Baltimore, returning from the Springs, where he had been passing some weeks during the summer, was sent for by her, and they had a long interview. He was invited to repeat his visit, as Matilda was observed to be less abstracted, and more disposed to converse, than she had been before. The next day another long conference took place, with the same perceptible effect, and on the fourth day she declared to her father and her mother the intention of joining the Catholic persuasion.

Her father said nothing, except that she had better deliberate well; but if she was conscientious, as he made no doubt she was, it mattered little, he thought, to what sect she belonged. Her mother undertook to argue against it; but find-

ing that Matilda, without wishing to enter into a controversy, was steadfast in her purpose, she desisted, especially as she gave signs of being more cheerful since her conferences with the priest.

Her parents remembered that she had heard this gentleman, who was both learned and eloquent, in Alexandria, and that she was greatly pleased with him; that afterwards she had met with him at Bath, and had heard him again with equal delight. While his discourses had only produced the transient admiration that pulpit eloquence never fails to cause in the sensitive souls of the fair sex, without her entertaining the least thought of abandoning the church in which she was educated, yet the remembrance of the effect he had produced, the sermons of Bourdaloue, and the accordance of some of their doctrines and ordinances with the present state of her feelings, induced her to solicit this conference, for the purpose of seeing if he could clear up the difficulties she entertained on the subject of transub-

stantiation, the worship of saints, and other Catholic tenets, that are repugnant to the common understandings of men; and he was so successful in explaining away the difficulties, or in supplying her with faith for what he could not reconcile to reason, that her scruples were entirely removed, and she became a sincere and confirmed Catholic.

Another motive probably had some influence on her in making this choice. In a short time afterwards she declared it was her fixed purpose to enter the convent at George Town. To this her parents made the most decided opposition. But neither the vehement remonstrances of her mother, nor even the tender entreaties of her father, could divert her from her purpose. Old Mr. M'Culloch and Mr. Trueheart, one of whom she loved, and the other she respected, more than any persons out of her family, joined to dissuade her with as little effect.

She took the veil about six months afterwards, purposely putting it off, to

prepare her mind for so important a step, and to shew that she was not influenced by a sudden impulse, but that it was a well-weighed and deliberate purpose; for, alas! we can never be indifferent to the opinion of the world on our conduct, however conscience may approve of what we do. Many years afterwards, strangers who visited that institution, which is a sort of curiosity in this country, and was almost the only one in the United States, before the acquisition of Louisiana, were struck with the appearance of a tall young lady, with large dark eyes and hair, long eyelashes, a fair skin, who shone among the rest like Diana among her nymphs, and who, engrossed by the fervour of devotion, never seemed to heed what was passing around, or to steal a look of curiosity, or of wishful regret, on the worldly beings who visited them, but who was unwearied in her watchings of the sick in her chamber, her liberality to the poor, and in the taste and simplicity of her dress, and her success in cultivating rare

and beautiful flowers. Her father allowed her a liberal annuity during his life, and continued it by his will; and, if I mistake not, the lady still remains in that convent, unless, as I have heard, she has been prevailed upon to go to the convent in Louisiana, for the purpose of superintending that institution, in which it was said there had been some relaxation of vigilance, and some mismanagement of their funds.

The subsequent history of the excellent Mrs. Grayson, and her unfortunate daughter, may be soon told. Louisa was taken sick in the night after the news of her brother's death reached her, and she continued ill some weeks, and it was long before she was considered to be out of danger, during all which time her mother staid in her room, and never left her day or night. The necessity this amiable woman was under of nursing her daughter, to keep life in her, was perhaps fortunate for her, as it diverted her mind from brooding over her afflictions until time had applied its softening hand to her sorrows,

and aided her natural patience and mild resignation, in bowing with submission to the will of Heaven.

Of all her neighbours, the first to visit her and offer their services were young Freeman and his wife, the new-married pair of whom we have spoken. They spent more time too at the Retreat than any others, and seldom a day passed without receiving some mark of their kindness.

After a while Louisa recovered from her illness, and such was her attachment to Matilda, that it was thought she would have followed her example, and become a Catholic, if Mrs. Grayson, whose religious faith was too firmly fixed to be shaken, and whose influence over her daughter was unbounded, had not exerted herself to prevent it. But she was little less of a devotee than her young friend. She joined her mother in her religious exercises regularly; but religion, which gave firmness and patience, and even cheerfulness, to her mother, had produced a settled

pensiveness on her daughter. She seldom went into company—never into gay circles; and as her mother had never thought it consonant with real religion to rely upon faith in exclusion of works, or safe to omit the practice, as well as the profession of virtue, she engaged her as an assistant in every kind and charitable act which her neighbours required. She died about two years afterwards, without having ever regained her health or spirits, of a lingering disease, and her mother yet resides, an aged woman, on the Opeccan, the lady Bountiful of the neighbourhood, a monument of the efficacy of religion in enabling us to bear up against the ills of this life, as well as in preparing us for a better.

After this sad catastrophe of Edward's fate, Miss De Peyster, who saw her lover with very different eyes since he was disgraced in the eyes of the public, and only wanted a decent excuse for rejecting him, found that excuse in his being a mur-

derer of a friend and benefactor, whose sister he had deserted after having seduced; and by a little of the same finesse by which she had drawn on Gildon to a second courtship, she had succeeded in getting one of her lovers to renew his addresses, and had married him.

Gildon was tried, and acquitted without difficulty by court and jury, but condemned to lasting infamy by the public; and, torn with remorse for shedding the blood of one of the noblest characters he had ever met with, he sought relief from the reproaches of the respectable, by courting the favour of the worthless. Plunging into the excesses of pleasure and dissipation, he lived and died a confirmed sot, and his father, who survived him, is yet undetermined how he shall dispose of his large wealth, and views with so much suspicion every attempt made to conciliate his favour, that it is not yet known who will inherit it.

Of the other characters who have appeared in this narrative, we have been at

some pains to learn their subsequent history, and after diligent inquiry, have understood that M'Culloch, after selling off his land piece after piece, was finally compelled to remove to Kentucky, where, though he had a valuable tract of land, he soon found the inconvenience of debts, courts, and sheriffs, as he had done in Virginia; and seemed to prove that he who with a piece of good land cannot keep out of debt in one place, will not be apt to do so in another. He however retained his health, his spirits, his taste for hunting, and for bantering his meek wife as a termagant, as long as she lived, which was but two years after she changed her residence.

Miss Margaret Buckley is yet single, and annually visits Alexandria, and imports the new fashions in dress, manners, furniture, &c., together with the oracular dicta of her aunt Browne.

Fanny, after Louisa moved out of the neighbourhood, became the victim of ill

health and melancholy, set herself diligently about bringing on her former lover, but finding his taste had changed, as she had other game in view, she tried her skill on a young deputy sheriff, raw in the world of fashion and etiquette, but dexterous enough in turning a penny, and whose father's land joined Mr. Buckley's: she succeeded, and a large family has crowned their loves, and they now live in the mansion-house of their father, who, as well as Mrs. Buckley, has been long since dead.

Frederick Steener married Miss Tidball, and they live in a handsome style. His wife succeeded so well in paying court to Mr. and Mrs. Fawkner, that, after providing a liberal annuity for Matilda, as has been mentioned, he settled the rest of his estate on Frederick's second son, who bore the name of James Fawkner, and of whom the old lady became extremely fond in her dotage. The old major never recovered his spirits after Matilda left him, and died several years before his wife.

Mr. Trueheart lived to a green old age, and died as he had lived, universally loved and respected.

Some further particulars have been learned of other characters, but it is thought that the acquaintance the reader has formed with them during their short appearance on the stage, is too slight to make their history interesting.—And thus, gentle reader, you may see in this true, but melancholy history, something of the life and manners which prevailed about twenty-five or thirty years ago in Virginia, and especially in that part of it which is called the Valley of Shenandoah.

FINIS.

MAR 8 1918